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Pulpit prayers

PULPIT PRAYERS

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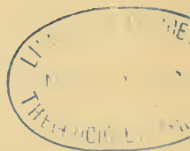
BY

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I

O LORD our God, from Whom cometh every good and perfect gift, give us, we pray Thee, the consciousness of Thy presence in this hour of worship, and grant that whatever we may each of us most need for our inward life we may find here and now. Draw our hearts to Thyself, we beseech Thee; prepare us for better service; help each of us to pass beyond the outward forms of worship; and to come, in the silence of our minds, into the secret place of the Most High. Flash Thy truth upon all our hearts and minds, help us in hearing and in speaking, bless us each as we severally require, receive our thanks for the individual and private blessings which we each possess, and for the universal gift which we each may have—the unspeakable gift of God in Jesus Christ. Hear us, we pray Thee, and grant us Thy presence and help now, for our Saviour Christ's sake.

II

O LORD, we thank Thee that Thou hast, in some measure, drawn back the veil, and shown us the things which are at Thy right hand. And we beseech Thee to help each of us, so long as we tarry here below, that we may press toward the mark for the prize of the high calling of God in Christ Jesus. May we forget the things that are behind, our failures, our

disappointments, our attainments, or only remember them to make us more earnest in seeking that tomorrow may not be as this day, but much more conformed to Thy holy will. Help all of us, we pray Thee, to live as those whose home is beyond the stars, and in the depths of God. And may this our life here below be so used by us as that it shall fit us to be 'partakers of the inheritance of the saints in light.'

We beseech Thee for this in regard of all of us gathered here this evening, and especially we pray for the younger members of this congregation that they may be kept innocent of much transgression, that they may begin aright, and so be delivered from many a pang and many a sorrow, many a disenchantment, and many a stain. O Lord, we beseech Thee to be near them, especially any amongst them who may be living solitary lives, and exposed to the temptations of this great city. We beseech Thee that these young men may abhor youthful lusts, which war against the soul. We pray that they may be armed against the suggestions of evil that lie on every side, that they may be kept from the corrupting influences of companionship that may be necessary for them, that they may be wise to understand the snares, the bait, and the hook. We beseech Thee that Thou wouldst bless them all in their several courses, granting to them such prosperity in this world's matters as Thou seest is best for them, and helping them to keep their hearts above the world, and with all their getting to seek most to get the durable riches and righteousness which are more precious than rubies, and none of the things that they desire are to be compared to it.

O Lord! bless us in our meeting now. We beseech

Thee to give us some word to speak; though our own words be feeble let Thy strength come with them. Do Thou help us, and give us wisdom and utterance and earnestness, and may the word of the Lord be magnified among us, and the message of the great love of the Christ Who keeps us from evil find entrance into many hearts. O Lord, bless us each in our several callings and condition; be near any of us who may have any special temptations or difficulties. If any of us are proving the loneliness of life, or its sadness, or its difficulties, and if our way may seem to be barred against us, do Thou help us to patience and courage, to wise effort, to dependence upon Thee. O Lord, do Thou keep us all, and may every one of us from this time forth say unto Thee, 'My Father! Thou art my Guide.' These young men and maidens we commend to Thee that they may grow up serving God, His faithful witnesses and soldiers, hating covetousness and all evil, and binding sound wisdom and discretion on their hearts and their foreheads.

And now, Lord, we would pray for others than ourselves. We would remember the many thousands who, at this time, are gathered together in different churches, in different lands, and with different tongues, to praise Thee and seek Thy face. And we beseech Thee that upon all Thy children Thy love may come down like the dove, and abide with them for ever.

Hear us now, when we cry to Thee, for all that are in any kind of sorrow or trouble, and humbly ask Thee that where Thou art chastening there may be the sense of the Father's love, even in the chastisement, and that Thy rod as well as Thy staff may comfort many a troubled heart.

Take us, O Lord, we pray Thee now, into Thy gracious care, and what we have failed to ask, or have asked amiss, do Thou give in large abundance, not for our sakes but for Christ's sake, and for Thy own Name and love's sake.

III

SET us free, O Lord, we beseech Thee, from the fetters of sin and earth, that we may indeed joyfully serve Thee, and labour on at Thy command. We would say, 'O Lord! truly I am Thy servant; Thou hast loosed my bonds.' Thou dost set us free that in Thy service we may find liberty. Thou dost honour us by letting us do Thy will. Thou dost incline our hearts, when we wait before Thee, to the joy of obedience and the blessedness of action for Thee. Thou dost draw us by mighty motives, Thou dost inspire us with power not our own. Grant, O Lord, that we, enriched by so many gifts of Thine hand, and enabled by so many inspirations of Thy grace, may indeed joyously wait upon God, in all holy obedience; and as the eyes of a servant are towards his master, so may ours be to Thee, O our God.

We bless Thee that Thou hast gathered us together this morning, and that so many mercies have crowned our path since last we met together. Another week of blessing from Thy hand has gone over our heads. We are another week nearer the time of rest. We beseech Thee that we may be conscious of some growth in Thy grace and knowledge, and that we may be aware of some weakening in us of anything that is contrary to Thy will, and may gather together here better prepared and more desirous to receive Thy great gifts of grace and goodness.

We thank Thee, Lord, for all Thy blessings to us. We praise Thee for daily care and nightly mercies. We beseech Thee that Thou wouldst help us to offer up to Thee not only the words of thanksgiving but the sacrifice of loving, trustful, and obedient hearts, and that our characters may become more like what Thou wouldst have us to be. We have to pray for the forgiveness of many imperfections and sins. We could not lose the consciousness of our own shortcomings. We pray Thee to deliver us from all illusions as to our own strength and our own righteousness. We pray Thee for quickened consciences, enlightened by Thee; and we beseech Thee that Thou wouldst preserve us from ever losing sight of our own deep necessities, or from ever seeing them so mountainous and great as that they obscure Thy greater mercy and Thy more than sufficient supplies. May we ever hold in one grasp our own need and Thy infinite riches, our own sinfulness and Thy free blessing, our own deficiencies and Thy wealth.

We pray that Thou wouldst use our many necessities and wants as open doors through which Thy grace may come into our hearts. We pray that we may keep open the door for the entrance of all Thy gifts. Draw near to us now, and help us always to wait on the Lord so that we shall not want any good. Thine ears are open to the cry of the righteous; make us righteous that our cry may 'enter into the ears of the Lord of Sabaoth.' Teach us how and what to desire. Help us to subordinate all our wishes for earthly things to the higher aspirations after greater and deeper good. May our lives be in accordance with that prayer; and may we, in all our daily pursuits and amidst all the temptations and

distractions that belong to our earthly life, be seeking first the Kingdom of God and His righteousness. Lord, we feel that our lives would be very different if that prayer were fulfilled, and we know that it is in Thy heart to fulfil it unless we hinder Thee. So we beseech Thee that Thou wouldst mould us, and discipline us so that we may cease to set our affections and minds on things of earth shutting out the things that are above where Christ is. We may not know what we ask, we do not know how Thou mayest be pleased to fulfil the petition ; but we ask Thee to help us that we may stand to it, and even if Thou dost answer it by disappointment and by sorrow may believe that they too are working together for our good. Hear us ; in Thy mercy forgive, quicken, strengthen and answer us, through Christ Jesus our Lord.

IV

O LORD, Who dwellest in the light, and hast immortal life, we, out of the darkness and ringed about with death, do lift up our hearts to Thee, and beseech Thee that some beams of the light, and some touches of the life, may be ours. May they grow in us, may we see light more clearly in Thy light day by day, and drink ever deeper draughts from the fountain of life, and the river of Thy pleasures.

We draw near to Thee now, compassed about with many infirmities, and some of us carrying in our hearts some sorrows, and all of us conscious of much weakness which often foils our efforts ; and we beseech Thee that Thou wouldst help us not only to trust in the living God, Who giveth us all things richly to enjoy, but to flee all the things that are contrary to His will,

and earnestly to pursue after till we possess, godliness, faith, love, righteousness, and all manifold beauties and blessings with which Thou canst and dost desire to clothe our spirits.

Look upon us in this our assembly. Be very near each of us according to our different necessities. Thou knowest these better than any others can know them, better than we ourselves know them. Thou dost interpret the cries of our spirits which we often misunderstand, and thou knowest how to still the hunger of our souls which we often try to satisfy with things not much better than the husks that the swine did eat. We pray Thee that Thou wouldst come to us, and help us, giving to us the things that we most need, whether they are the things that we wish most or not. Do Thou discipline and train us, instruct and educate us. Bring us near to Thyself, and fashion us more after the likeness of Thy Son. May we, too, be transfigured, that our faces may shine as the light, and by the renewing of our minds may we altogether be transformed from conformity to this world. Guide us day by day by Thy wise counsels; may they never be neglected by us. Mould us by Thy shaping hands; may we be as the clay in the hands of the potter. Preserve us from struggling against Thy gifts, from leaving them untaken. Preserve us from misusing any of them for lower purposes than those for which they are sent; and help us that in all our doings, setting the Lord before us, we may be steadfast, unmovable, always abounding in the work of the Lord.

We would commend each other to Thee, in all the variety of our condition. Especially we pray that Thou wouldst be near any who may have a hard fight in the world, who may have burdens to carry that they

do not expect ever to lose, or ever to be fit to carry in their own strength. Comfort all sad hearts, enlighten all that may need guidance and light. Be near us in all the variety of our circumstances, and mould Thy gifts according to our characters and dispositions. And we pray that by whatever variety of method Thy providence may be working with any of us, may we be able to recognise the unity of purpose in all the various ways which Thou dost take, and may work together with God to make all things contribute to the highest end, even our perfecting.

We beseech Thee to bless us in our worship of this morning, and with like blessings draw near to all our brethren of every communion and tongue who on this day may be bowing their hearts before Thee. We beseech Thee that large blessings may come down upon praying souls. We beseech Thee that they may treasure the blessings which Thou dost bestow, and since Heaven's gates are open may our gates not be shut.

Now, Lord, we beseech Thee to hear us, to take us into Thy holy care and keeping, to forgive all our many sins; and grant us now Thy help, according to our need, through Jesus Christ our Lord and Saviour.

V

O LORD, our gracious and glorious Lord, who dwellest in the light inaccessible, and inhabitest the praises of Eternity, we would worship before Thee with the reverence and godly fear becoming us. Thou art holy, separated from all the limitations of Thy creatures, and far above our thoughts. But we bless Thee that Thou hast come near us, near us in Thy daily gracious

providences, near us in the voice in our own hearts, near us best of all in Thy Son. And we thank Thee that, impassable for us as is the gulf between us and Thee, Thou hast bridged it over; and there is for us now a way into the Holiest of all, by which thoughts and love and trust and obedience can pass into Thy presence, and be united to Thee.

We beseech Thee, O Lord, that Thou wouldst help us, while we lose nothing of our reverence, to gain much of childlike confidence that Thou mayest be our dearest faith, and not only our fear and our dread. We beseech Thee to help us now, by that spirit of adoption, whereby even we can take upon our lips our Lord's prayer in Gethsemane, and like Him can pray 'Abba! Father!'

Teach us all that lies in that great Name, and may it ever be present in our hearts and lives, so that we may bring Thee not only the honour due to a Father, but the love which Thou dost wish more.

We bless Thee for all Thy great mercies to us. We draw near to Thee now, laden with benefits. Thou crownest our days with Thy goodness; and we believe, though it is sometimes hard to feel it and be sure of it, that all the paths of the Lord are mercy and truth to such as keep His covenant. Help us to keep it. Teach us to accept Thy commandments, to believe Thy promises, to live in the light of Thy Presence, and whether present or absent to labour that we may be well-pleasing to Thee; and then do Thou help us that we may ever be compassed about with Thy favour as with a shield, and may feel that in union with Thee all our need is greatened and purified and glorified.

Be with each of us in our daily lives, guide us by Thy wisest counsel, draw near to us as we wait before Thee,

and let our gatherings together be for the better and not for the worse. May we each, coming in Christ's Name, find Him in the midst. Hear us; in Thy mercy forgive and answer and bless us, for Jesus Christ our Saviour's sake.

VI

O LORD, our gracious Father, we come to Thee to pray that Thou wouldst help us to have our loins girded and our lamps burning; and that Thou wouldst strengthen us, with all energy and faithfulness, to labour at Thy command, and to offer all our works to Thee. May we increasingly be able to look beyond the things seen and temporal. May they be transparent to us, and shew us the things unseen and eternal. Help us not to make snares of what Thou dost mean for merciful occasions for growth in Thy likeness to Thee. Help us not to shut Thee out with the screens of our duties or of our blessedness. May we day by day be looking for, and hasting unto, the Lord in the brightness of His coming; and may our lips be all the more full of earnest service, because we know that the night is far spent and the day is at hand.

Regard us all now, in the light of our circumstances. Thou knowest these better than we know ourselves, and far better than we know one another. May Thy gracious wisdom guide us, and may we not resist Thy guidance. May they not fail to give us what Thou seest our condition most requires. May we not turn away from Thy gifts, nor squander or misuse them. Keep us from wasting our Lord's substance, from wasting the substances that Thou dost give us. May we feel that we are stewards as well as possessors; and may we, in

all things, seek to praise and glorify Thee. Bless us each according to our diverse requirements. Comfort any that are in sorrow; be near all lonely and sad hearts. Let sorrow and loss be ministers to us of joy and gain. And may any tribulation of any kind, great or small, any difficulty or perplexity, anything disagreeable or unwelcome that comes to us in the way of our duty be useful to, and minister good to, us. And do Thou grant that, amidst all losses and pains, we may hear the great Voice that says to us, 'Come up hither!' and may we more and more set our affections on the things above, where Christ is; and with Him so many whom we know and loved, sitting at the right hand of God.

Help us each in our several parts in this service, that hearing we may hear what God the Lord shall speak, and speaking we may preach the preaching that He bids us. Hear, and forgive us, and accept our petitions through Jesus Christ our Saviour.

VII

WITH lowly love, and loving trust, and trustful obedience, we would come to Thee now, O Lord. With Thee is the fountain of life. All our seeing is by Thy light, and all our joys are in the drinking of the river of Thy pleasures. Help us, we beseech Thee, drawn by Thy grace, and driven by our sins, and knit into such close communion with Thyself, that there may flow into our hearts the life, the light, the joy, which Thou dost mean us to possess. We acknowledge that we, by our own faults, have been dead in trespasses and sins. We acknowledge that we have loved darkness more than the light of life. We acknowledge that we

have sought, and in some partial measure found, our joys elsewhere than in Thee. And we come to Thee now, not without some sense of our follies, and beseech Thee that Thou wouldst deliver us from the snares of falsely fixed desires, and wouldst keep us from the folly of seeking in the world for what it can never give, and wouldst stir us up that we may take hold upon Thee, and laying hold of Thee may find that we have Thee for our very own.

O Lord, whether we know it or not, and we often do not know it, our heart and our flesh crieth out for the living God. We beseech Thee that we may turn these cries into prayers, and that they may be the prayers of faith, and that they may be seconded and backed up by our daily lives, and that so we may receive that without which we shall continue always to be miserable and poor and blind and naked, and all the while conceiting ourselves to have need of nothing. O Lord! teach us our great wants, and then give us Thy great gifts, and fill us with the power and the peace of Thine own life bestowed through Jesus Christ Who is our Life. And help us, day by day, to live the lives that we live in the flesh by the faith of the Son of God, Who loved us and gave Himself for us.

Do Thou, we beseech Thee, pour out upon this congregation the blessing of Thy good Spirit, that its divine influences may move upon all our minds and hearts and wills; and that whether we hear or speak the word of the Lord may to us be mighty as the hammer that breaks the rock in pieces, gentle as the rain upon the mown grass, and full of blessing as it only can be.

We pray Thee to help us in our worship, to guide our thoughts when we meditate upon Thy truth, to keep

us from wandering away in mind and imagination and fancy into the ordinary affairs of life with all its trivialities and its trials. Help us as we draw near to Thee in worship, and as we open our minds and hearts to the teaching of Thy truth. Grant that our meeting may be full of blessing and of lasting good for every one of us. We would come to Thee with humble thanksgiving for all Thy great mercies to us, and for Him Who is the sun of them all, and in Whom all the sweets of Thy giving lie compacted, even Jesus Christ our Saviour.

We beseech Thee to receive our acknowledgments; we pray that they may become more adequate and more operative in our lives, so that to us all the service shall be an honour, and all that the Lord lays upon us shall be a joy to accept and to do. Forgive our many sins, cleanse our hearts from their manifold evils, deliver us from all our errors, lead us into the full truth. May we live by the truth that we know, and be ever growing in the grace and in the knowledge of the Lord and Saviour. Hear us in our prayer, and in Thy great mercy forgive and accept us, through Christ our Lord.

VIII

O LORD our God, we pray that we may not be of those who think they see and are blinded by the light. Help us all to fix our faith and our hope on that Son of God, and to be His in very deed and truth, not only in word but in our inmost lives, in the depths of our hearts, in the foundations of our thinking, and in all the energies of our activity. We come to Thee with humble thanksgiving that Thou dost permit us thus to gather ourselves together, and together to receive from Thee, as

we trust, some impulses that may help us on our journey. Thou knowest each of us here before Thee, and all our present want; and we pray that every one of us may wish for, and may get from God, the things that we most require. Thou hast often seen our foolish desires; some of them Thou hast granted, and some of them Thou hast withheld. We thank Thee that there are desires which are sure to be granted, and we pray that we may increasingly long for the things which Thou dost long to give, and confine our seeking to those gifts which we shall be sure to find. We thank Thee that there is one region in which Thou canst do exceeding abundantly above all we can ask or think, and will do it. O Lord, help us to wish most for what is best, and to influence desire and hope, as well as faith and trust, and submission, and obedience, that Thou hast Thyself manifested and brought to us in Jesus Christ our Lord.

Teach us this evening how to speak Thy word, guide our thoughts, preserve us from saying anything that might be a stumbling-block to any. May the simplicity of motive mark all that we say, and may the word of the Lord shine even through the imperfect medium of the human utterance and vindicate its own divine power and sufficiency, whatever becomes of the vase in which it is carried. We pray for one another; we beseech Thee that Thou wouldst be near us according to our different circumstances and needs. If there are any amongst us who are in sorrow or trouble, any from whom Thou hast taken away earthly treasures, any who have been brought near to the gates of death, any who may be laden with anxiety, or perplexity, or cares, and surely there are many such among us, we beseech Thee that Thou wouldst help

us to cast our burdens upon the Lord, Who bears our burdens, and Who gives us strength to bear them, and to live in the possession of that peace that passes understanding, because we have ceased to be anxious about ourselves, and anxiety has been swallowed up in faith.

Comfort all sad hearts, O Lord, we pray Thee. Be near us according to our different difficulties and conflicts. Guide us by Thy counsel, and make us willing to accept Thy guidance. Hear our prayers, make us more prayerful, receive our thanksgiving and deepen our gratitude, answer our petitions, and make us more earnest in asking. We pray Thee to hear us, and to grant us Thy blessing, and help now, for our Lord Christ's sake.

IX

O LORD our God, many are the wonderful works which Thou hast done, and Thy thoughts which are to usward are thoughts of good and not of evil. And we bless Thee for the peaceful confidence we have that there is nothing in Thy heart or mind towards us but a Father's pitying love. Strong in that confidence which we have learned from our elder Brother, and His unveiling of Thy heart, we draw near to Thee now, and seek that the flame, the immortal flame, of Thy love may kindle in our hearts some answering and kindred glow.

When we come to Thee, O Lord, we are overwhelmed with the number of Thy mercies. They cannot be reckoned up in order unto Thee; they can only be reckoned up in order by Thee. And yet we pray that we may have a clear perception of, and a more adequate thankfulness for, and a more entire dependence upon, Thy loving heart and Thine innumerable mercies.

Draw us, we beseech Thee, to Thyself by thoughts of Thee; and when there rise up in our consciences the sins that are more than the hairs of our heads, and we feel as if we durst not look up, may the thought of Thy greater mercies, more numerous still than these, strengthen and encourage us. What should we do if the measure of Thy forgiveness did not overlap and exist far beyond the measure of any man's or of all men's sin? We thank Thee that we can cast ourselves on Thee, and flee to Thee from ourselves; and we beseech Thee that Thy good Spirit, which Thou dost give to them that ask Thee, may indeed dwell in our hearts, and mould us by the power of thankfulness for Thy service. May it be true of us, too, that we delight to do Thy will, and that Thy law is within our hearts. We come to Thee empty-handed, sacrifice and offering Thou dost not require; Thou hast provided it. We come to Thee to receive, not to give; we come as those for whom the great offering has already been presented which makes all ours needless, except as thank-offerings. And we pray Thee to help us to render ourselves to Thee in entire surrender and devotion, as the token of our grateful acceptance of Thy greatest gift.

O Lord, regard each of us as we are here before Thee this morning, and in Thy great mercy help us really to draw near to Thee. How often, how long, and how far we have wandered from Thee Thou knowest, and we partly know. We are glad that our brethren do not know. We pray that we may know it better; and we beseech Thee that Thou wouldst now, in Thy grace and according to Thy promises, move upon all our hearts and bring us very near to Thyself in grateful love and quiet dependence, and longing aspiration after Thee; that our minds and hearts and wills may all be filled,

hallowed, strengthened by Thy felt presence; and that we may be able more and more to do Thy will, and to rejoice in Thyself. We need Thy strength at every turn in our daily lives, and we bless Thee that we get all that we need if only we will take it. Lord! be Thou near each of us, our Light and our Salvation, the strength of our hearts and our portion for ever. And help us, whatever burdens we have to carry, and whatever sorrows Thou layest upon us, and whatever heavy tasks we may have to bear, whatever perplexities may gnaw at our hearts, whatever difficulties may block our paths, help us to cast ourselves into Thy outstretched hands, and commit the keeping of bodies and souls unto Thee as to a faithful Creator and a loving Father. May we have, in all times and in all conflicts deeper than the strife, the peace which passes understanding and garrisons heart and mind.

Take us now into Thy loving care, forgive all our evils, quicken and strengthen in us any little spark of good, and bring it to a flame. Hast Thou not promised that Thou wilt not quench the dimly burning wick? We pray Thee to tend the fire in our hearts, and help us not to quench it. We pray Thee to hear us, and in Thy mercy to accept us, through Jesus Christ our Lord.

X

O LORD our Father, Who hast stored for us in Jesus Christ all treasures of wisdom and knowledge and righteousness and power, we bless Thee that the Storehouse is open, that the box has been broken, and the ointment poured forth. We thank Thee for our access to the wealth of God in Christ our Saviour, and we beseech Thee that each of us may fill up our empti-

ness, and enrich our poverty, and strengthen our weakness by laying hold of, and drawing into the very substance of our lives, the riches of God in Him. We pray for grace that we may be more completely and gladly and constantly receiving of 'His fulness, grace for grace,' and that all in us which is low and weak and dark may be lifted, confirmed and enlightened by the inflow into our poor lives of the triumphant risen life of our Saviour. Help us day by day to find that He is made unto us wisdom and righteousness and sanctification and full redemption. And in all our daily conflicts may we have the presence of our Captain, and in all our daily journeyings may we have the guidance of our Leader.

We bless Thee that Thou knowest our hearts, our circumstances, and our needs, as well as our desires, for our desires are often false and our needs are always real. We pray that Thou wouldst regard them rather than our wishes, and that Thou wouldst minister to us as Thou surely wilt, if we will only let Thee, of the things that are requisite and necessary both for body and for soul. We cast ourselves upon Thee. If any of us are weighed down by any sorrow, or are feeling the desolations that sometimes come into every life, or have been called upon to part from the desire of our eyes, and have aching and empty hearts, we pray that Thou wouldst draw near to such, and comfort and help them to take the comfort that God gives. We bless Thee that we do not need to doubt Thy loving care of us and our dear ones, and we pray that we may stand firm in that confidence, not only when the sun is in the sky, and all the winds are still, but when clouds darken the heavens, and tempests desolate the earth.

We beseech Thee that Thou wouldst regard us in our

various duties and occupations, and keep us from the snares of our callings, and the defects of our qualities, and the weaknesses of our characters; and that Thou wouldst help us day by day to set before ourselves more constantly the great Pattern after which we have to walk, and the great Reward that is at the end of the journey. May we live by Christ. May we live for eternity. Watch over each of us. May we make all things here helps to the truer possession of the unfailing treasures. In the days to come, be they few or many, bless us with more of the life of God in our hearts. Speak Thy gracious word to us as we worship here in Thy presence. May the treasure be marred by the earthen vessel as little as possible, and grant that we may not darken counsel nor weaken Thine entreating by any poor words of ours.

O Lord, we would commit ourselves to Thy gracious care. Be near us now to bless us; be with us in this act of worship, and answer our petitions, through Jesus Christ our Lord and Saviour.

XI

GLADLY, O Lord, would we come to Thee, as homeless wanderers to our home; and we bless Thee that unto all generations Thou hast been, and wilt be, their habitation and their strength. May we each enter in now, by lowly faith, by longing and love, by obedience and submission; and may we feel that we are indeed temples, and together for this hour a temple of the living God.

We beseech Thee to regard us in our meeting this morning, and as Thou hast opened Thy heart and Thine ear, ere we did cry, and opened Thine hand to

bestow, what we have to ask Thee for most is that Thou wouldst help us to take the things that are freely given to us, without our desiring them, of God.

Look down on us, we beseech Thee ; draw us to Thyself, and help us with purged eyes to see the unseen things and to lose sight of the things temporal, if they would interfere with our vision and possession of the things eternal.

Hear us now, mercifully accept, and answer us, through our Saviour Jesus Christ.

XII

HELP us, O our gracious God, we beseech Thee, to come into Thy presence with the offerings of our hearts. Thou art not worshipped with men's hands ; Thou needest nothing. We praise Thee when we bring our empty hands to Thee, and hold them up in faith to be filled out of Thy fulness. And we would recognise that Thou art He that giveth unto all men all things liberally, and art indeed the giving God.

O Lord, let Thy love be upon us, and such of its tokens in outward things as Thou knowest to be best for us ; and help us ever rigidly to keep our desires within the limits of Thy manifest providence, and not to mar the gifts that we have by vain murmurings for those that we have lost, or have never possessed. We would come to Thee now, with lowly thankfulness ; for surely when we measure Thy benefits by our deserts it becomes us to accept the least of all Thy gifts as the manifestation of the love, great beyond all our thoughts. Thou stoorest from Thy Heaven. Thou dost not deal with us according to our sins, but according to Thy own heart, and the depth and the fulness of

Thy own loving purposes. So we have to render thanks for our smallest benefits, but, alas! Thine assiduity in giving robs us often of our thankfulness; and we have become so accustomed to Thy manifold and uninterrupted light that we do not recognise it, or know that we are walking in it, until sometimes a cloud comes, and the beams are shorn.

O Lord! may we not lose our good gifts before we understand and appreciate them. May we make them a thousandfold better because our clear eyes behold, and our grateful hearts recognise, their connection with Thyself. And into every corner of our daily life, whether looked at as Thy gift, or as devolving upon us our duties, may we carry the strengthening and the calming, the purifying thought, that God is here, and that we rest upon Him. We come to Thee this morning, especially, with devout thankfulness for all which this day has, for so many days, brought to our memories, of Thy greatest and most wondrous gift. We thank Thee 'for the Christ that died, yea! rather, that is risen again, Who is even at the right hand of God, Who also maketh intercession for us.' We thank Thee for that risen life. We pray that even whilst we are passing the time of our sojourning here we may be sitting with Him in the heavenly places; and may, in the depths of our being, partake of that glorified life of our Brother and our Saviour. May it be true of us that 'our lives are hid with Christ in God.'

O Lord, look upon our gathering now, and since Thou hast given us the opportunity of bringing our own dying embers of faith and love together, may our united supplications break into a brighter flame; and may we find here that whilst Thou hast benefits to give which only those who are left alone with Thee do ever

truly receive, Thou hast also benefits to give to the great congregation. Give us these, O Lord, and help each of us, bearing, as we must do, our own individual burdens, that we may receive from Thee the common grace which takes in our spirit the shape that is most required, and help us to bear each his own burdens, and so far as may be his brother's.

We pray for one another, therefore we beseech Thee that Thou wouldst be near each of us, according to all the variety of our callings and our circumstances and characters. Deliver us from the faults of our qualities, and from the temptations of our vocations. Deliver us from the weaknesses that creep over us all by reason of associations and circumstances. And help us, day by day, to renew and to increase, and to be faithful to, our consecration of ourselves to Thee, that we may adorn the teaching in all things. Let Thy counsel guide us, and may we not be of those who have no understanding, and can be taught by nothing but blows and bridles. Guide Thou us with Thine eye, and may we be so near Thee that we can see what that eye means, and catch at once its directions and its benedictions. If any of us have any special weight of sorrows, cares, perplexities, losses, regret or mourning upon our minds and hearts, we pray that Thou wouldst come near to such. Thou emptiest places, but it is that Thou mayest fill them. And we pray that we may ever find in our trials, be they great or small, in all our losses be they reparable or no, that God Himself is our gain, and God Himself is our strength.

We beseech Thee to bless all Thy faithful servants who, in any communion and in any land, tongue, or fashion, are this day trying to make Christ's glory shine more widely, and His Name to be more loved and trusted. The Lord be with all those that love Jesus

Christ in incorruption ; and upon all faithful efforts, however humble and poor, let Thy blessing rest, we pray. Be with us all, and may our meeting together this morning be a help to each of us, in the road that we ought to travel, and draw each of us nearer to Jesus Christ, and help to make us in some small measure more like Him.

Give Thy blessing to us when we try to meditate together on Thy word, and guide the thoughts of hearers and of speaker, we beseech Thee ; and grant that Thy voice may manifestly be heard even through the imperfect instrument to which Thou hast been pleased to commit the task of preaching Thy word. And we ask that here Christ's Kingdom may be established and His name magnified. O Lord ! in like manner bless all good people who are in their several ways doing the same work. Establish Thou the work of their hands upon them. May it be the work of Thy hands, that so Thy glory may pour into Thy servants.

Now we desire to commend ourselves to Thy gracious care. We beseech Thee to be near us and bless us ; accept our thanks for all Thy mercies to us, and still manifest Thy grace and love in its strange fulness and condescension to such poor empty lowly creatures as we are, whom Thou dost exalt and enrich by the unspeakable gift of Thy dear Son. In His Name we ask all.

XIII

O LORD, Thou art our All-in-all. May we know Thee for such, and may we take Thee for ours, and find that Thou dost supply all our need according to Thy riches in glory in Christ Jesus. We would draw near to Thee now, empty, to be filled ; dark, to be illumined ; weak, to be made strong ; low, to be raised and sup-

ported. And we bless Thee that beyond what we can ask or think Thou art exceeding abundantly able to give, and dost long to give. We have often hindered the flow of Thy mercy and power into our hearts and lives by our own faithlessness, by our own want of desire to possess Thee, and by our eager distracting of ourselves over many things, to the obscuring of the one thing needful. But we beseech Thee at once for forgiveness and for help, that we may understand better how all our wealth is in one pearl of great price; and may be willing to give up all other if needful; and when needful, that we may clasp Thee to our hearts and keep Thee in our safest treasure-house.

We would draw near to Thee, O Lord, with humble prayer for the enlightenment of Thy wisdom, for the firm grasp of what is true, for hearts submitted to Thy will and spirits that walk close with Thee, and are therefore strong and blessed. We pray for forgiveness for all the past; we look back and see many blunders, many shortcomings, many sins. O Lord, arm us against ourselves, lift us above ourselves, make us willing to be what Thou dost will us to be, and to do what Thou dost desire we should do; and do Thou fit us day by day for all the work, for all the blessings, for all the possibilities of our daily lives. Keep us from temptation, build up the weak places in our characters, and help us to build them up. Show us the things where we fall conspicuously short or go altogether contrary to Thy holy will. And do Thou grant, we beseech Thee, that we may have no hankering after the things that we ought to get rid of, and no unwillingness to be parted from our weaknesses and our sins. Thou art ready with Thy mighty word to discern the thoughts and intents of the heart, and to sever the

sinful and evil growths from us. We pray that we may submit ourselves to Thy grace, and more and more find that Thou art near us, helping us to be better than we are, and drawing us under the fuller influence of Thy full Spirit.

Hear us, O Lord, in these our prayers, and reveal Thyself to us in this our service, accompanying all its parts with the appropriate blessing, and making each of us to feel that we have really been in touch with God, and have got some blessing from His open hand. Hear us now in our petitions, forgive our many sins, and in Thy mercy accept and bless us, through Jesus Christ our Lord and Saviour.

XIV

O LORD our Father, Who hast set before us the perfect 'love which suffereth long and is kind, is not easily provoked nor soon angry,' but beareth all our evil ways, and hopeth all things of the worst of us, help us, we beseech Thee, that we may be 'imitators of God as beloved children,' and walking in love as Thou hast loved us. Dwell in our hearts that they may be gentle and good. Dwell in our minds that we may know and love and hold by Him Who is the Truth and the Life. Dwell in our wills that we may run in the way of Thy commandments with glad hearts, and never be unwilling to do any of the things that Thou, in our consciences and in Thy word, dost bid us to do.

Grant that this hour of worship may be full of blessings for each of us. Thou knowest what each of us most requires in the spiritual life. We can but partially interpret our own necessities, but we bless Thee that we have recourse to One Who understands our

needs altogether. So we would not dictate to Thee, O Lord, but would pray Thee that Thou wouldst arm each of us with the special qualities and graces which our vocations and characters and circumstances most require. Be near any of us that may have special burdens of sorrow or solitude to carry. If any of us are rejoicing in hope, and the world seems bright to us, may we learn not to be dazzled by the light, but carry a full cup without loss or spilling. Whatever be our tasks or our condition, come Thou to us, and we shall be lords of all things, and fit for every duty. Abide in our hearts, and may we not shut their doors against Thee ever. Lead us by Thy grace and counsel, and be to each of us that which we most need.

Now, Lord, we desire to commend to Thee others than ourselves, to pray for the good estate of the whole Catholic Church; and to beseech Thee that all Thy children may growingly know the Father's will, and delight to do it, and that all may more fully discharge the functions which Thou hast laid upon them, and be Thy witnesses in the world.

We pray for our Sovereign and our country, and all can influence its action or opinion. 'Give peace in our time, O Lord.' Turn away men's thoughts from the false glories of battle to the conflicts and contests and possibilities of Peace which 'hath her victories no less renowned.' And we beseech Thee that Thou wouldst graciously grant that the perturbations of human society may drive and draw many to Him Who alone can speak peace to the nations, and give rest to the world.

And now we pray Thee to take us into Thy gracious care, and mercifully be with us as we wait before Thee, for our Lord Christ's sake.

XV

O LORD our God, help us, we beseech Thee, that our hand of faith may indeed grasp that strong Refuge, and that our souls may be bound close to Thee. We thank Thee that though our hand be weak Thine is strong. Thou dost lay hold of us by all the manifestations of Thy love around and within us. Thou dost lay hold on us most chiefly by Him Who is the Arm of the Lord; and we pray that we may never shift ourselves away, or wrench ourselves away, from that loving grasp wherewith we are apprehended of God. We beseech Thee to help us rather to respond to it, to lay hold on Him Who lays hold of us, and by our humble faith answering to Christ's great faithfulness; and working to make our own all the blessings, the sweetness, the power, the purity which Thou hast treasured for the world in Him, we come to Thee now, O Lord, with thanksgivings for Thy great mercies to us. Strange they are, and numberless too. We bless Thee that we have a place in Thy heart, and that Thou dost make it plain to us that we have by a hundred blessings bestowed upon us day by day. And we beseech Thee that whatever be our present circumstances, whatever drops of bitterness Thou mayest have been pleased to mingle in our cup, we may still take it as the cup of salvation, and drink, calling upon the Name of the Lord.

Help us, we pray Thee, in all circumstances to keep an untrembling, unchanging faith, and at all times to be ready to do Thy will, and to bear Thy will. Strengthen our weakness, lighten our darkness, accompany us in our loneliness, lead our feeble feet in the paths of righteousness which Thou hast before

ordained that we should walk in them, and give us ever to see the recompense of the reward, and to be drawn towards the great Light beyond.

We thank Thee for this opportunity of uniting our prayers, praises, and meditations together again. We pray that we may find not only our fellow-worshippers, but our Father and our High Priest in this service ; and that all of us may be drawn nearer to Thee, comforted and helped, rebuked and guided, stimulated and inspired by our meeting together this morning, and that the Name of the Lord may be magnified among us. Hear us, O Lord, we beseech Thee, in this our prayer ; in Thy mercy accept of us, and forgive and bless us, through Jesus Christ our Lord and Saviour.

XVI

O LORD our God, we thank Thee that Thou hast given to us Thyself as our Pattern, even whilst we shrink from the duties thereby laid upon us. But we believe that Thou dost give what Thou commandest unto them that desire, for dear love's sake, to do Thy will ; and we would take these great words which still linger in our ears, and dwell in our hearts, as Thy promises, even more than as Thy commandments ; and believe that Thou dost intend that we all should be partakers of Thy holiness. O Lord, the darker our thoughts of our present selves the more may we cleave to the transcendent hopes of what we may become which Thou dost allow us without presumption to cherish ; the more may we seek to live under the daily sweet pressure of that great commandment that we are to be 'imitators of God, as beloved children.' Help us that we may so live, forgive us that we have not so lived. Reveal to us

more and more of the grace and help which Thou art ready to give us all, in order that we may be holy as Thou art holy. And strengthen us in every detail of daily life, and in all the work of suppression and of stimulus which we have to apply to the good and the evil of it. Help us when we try to meditate upon Thy truth this morning in our worship, and when we try to speak a word in Thy Name. May it truly be in Thy Name. May it be felt to be so by us, and may the power of the Lord be present in our midst, made perfect in man's weakness.

O Lord! we would commend one another to Thy loving care and keeping, and beseech Thee that whatever may be the diversified needs of us Thy servants, the one great gift, which can take so many shapes, may be granted to us, and may be felt by each of us to be the very thing that we require. May we be more aware than we often are of a Divine Helper by our side. May we feel the touch of Thy hand with us. May we ever yield to that touch. Guide us in all our ways, comfort any sad hearts that are here, speak peace to any troubled minds or hearts. According to our characters or circumstances be near us all. Give us all the grace to live as those who have tasted that the Lord is gracious.

We commend to Thee all whom we love, all whom we should remember, the whole of Thy servants throughout the world, in all lands and communities, in all forms of faith, and beseech Thee that Thou wouldst bless them and help them to be true to their convictions and to their Lord, and guide them all, and us with them into fuller light. And help us that we may possess the blessing of those who do the things that they know. We commit ourselves to Thy care, we beseech Thee to

accept and to bless us, through Jesus Christ our Lord and Saviour.

XVII

O LORD our God, from Thee cometh our salvation, may our expectation come from Thee, and be fixed on Thee. May our souls truly wait on the Lord. May we hear in our hearts that power belongeth unto God, and also mercy; and in that blessed twin assurance may we bring our prayers and our trust to Thee, and rest in the Lord, and wait patiently for Him, and have such desires as He is sure to give. We come to Thee with thankfulness, O Lord, for Thy hand has been laden with good; and when we praise Thee we would praise Thee for all the way by which the Lord our God hath led us. Our song shall be of mercy, and of judgment, which is mercy too. We praise Thee for all the plain and felt good, and we would not withhold our praise from the good which has a bitter taste. But we beseech Thee that Thou wouldst bring us into closer unity with Thyself, that our wills and Thine may be set on the same things for us, and that we may thereby be able to understand the loving-kindness of the Lord when He changes the methods of His dealings, but preserves the one purpose of His grace.

O Lord! look upon the cold hearts which we bring to Thee now to be warmed, the feeble faith which we would fain have strengthened, the desires which have need to be far stronger in order to bring down Thy blessings. We come to Thee with confession as well as with thanksgiving; we feel that we have set up in our hearts many false images, and that we have turned away from Thee far too often, and have sought

in broken cisterns for what we can only find in the fountain of living water. But we pray for Thy pardoning mercy, and, O Lord! if we dare say it, we pray still more for Thy purifying grace, for Thy confirming steadfast spirit, and beseech Thee that we may be kept more constantly on the level of our highest selves, and that these highest selves may be drawn ever higher and nearer to Thee. We pray for guidance, for surely we are blind and dark. We pray for strength, for if we have any power it is too much for ill, and all the strength is Thine both for doing and for willing that which is good. Come to us, then, we pray Thee, that we may strongly resolve, and resolutely perform, the things that are pleasing in Thy sight. Deliver us from all the oppression of our own faults, and past evils. May they not have dominion over us. Lead us, we pray Thee, into a large land of liberty and light and life, and may we walk before Thee there with glad hearts. We praise Thee for Thy love; we thank Thee for the assurance of it, which we have. We bless Thee for Him Who is its seal and pledge, and its channel to us; and we ask that we may be more entirely and continually knit to Jesus Christ in faith, love, fellowship, and obedience, and so may be brought more fully into the fellowship of the Father and of the Son.

O Lord! regard us in our morning's worship. Be near us, receive us graciously, so will we render to Thee the sacrifice of praise, through Jesus Christ our Lord and Saviour.

XVIII

BRING us, O Lord, we beseech Thee, to a clear vision of the world and the things unseen, and to a right

comparison of their value with that of the things seen and temporal. May we learn and practise the belief that life consisteth not in the abundance of possessions, but in fellowship with Thyself. And to us may it more and more be true that everything is precious in the measure in which it leads us to our true riches, the wealth and the fulness of God.

O Lord, Thou knowest how hard it is for us day by day to keep ourselves at that height of serene contemplation of Time and Eternity, Earth and Heaven, the world and God, to which we sometimes attain. And we pray for Thy grace to aid us that it may become more and more our settled conviction, operative in our lives, that Thou art the Truth of our hearts and our Portion for ever. Forgive, we pray Thee, all our wanderings, our unworthiness, our falling below our own knowledge of what we ought to be, and how we ought to live. And enlighten us, and not only enlighten us but inspire, that we may do the things which we know, and possess the benediction which the Lord has uttered on such.

We pray for Thy gracious help in our worship of this morning, and beseech Thee that Thou wouldst teach us how to hear and to speak Thy word. Be to us a mouth and wisdom, give the hearing ear, the docile heart, the cheerful will. And may glad obedience follow the reception of Thy message. Bless each of us here before Thee, as our several conditions and characters may require; and give each of us the gifts that we need for the daily contest, for the daily march, for the daily duty and growth in grace. If any of us have sorrows in our hearts, Thou art the Lord that healest. Thou delightest to bind up the wounds which Thou hast, in Thy loving providence

made. May we never spurn the balm which Thou dost provide, nor seek the futile solace of earthly things. Be near each of us in our temptations, in our joys, in our work; dwell in our homes, move upon our hearts. Be with us in our trades and professions, and in all our occupations and walks in life; and help us to adorn the teaching in all things, and to shew Whose we are, and Whom we serve.

Draw near to us now, and bless all our fellow-worshippers and fellow-believers throughout the world. Be with all of us who are seeking the truth, all who are trying to do the right, all who are endeavouring to spread the knowledge of Jesus Christ throughout the world; and all who, in any way, are seeking unselfishly to help their fellows. We pray that Thy Kingdom may come, in our hearts, in our own land, amongst the churches that profess to be Christ's, in this England and throughout the world. And now, O Lord, we desire to commend ourselves to Thee, and pray Thee to accept and bless us, for our Lord and Saviour's sake.

XIX

O LORD, we thank Thee that though Thou art the High and Holy One, far above, and separate from, our lowliness and limitations, we can come near to Thee, and draw close to Thy presence, and find our Home in Thy heart. We, too, would sing of the mercy of the Lord for ever, and bless Thee for all the manifestations of Thy loving heart which Thou dost make to us; and would pray for eyes to see, and hearts to welcome, the revelation of Thyself, the open secret that is all around us. May we never be of those who walk in darkness even when drenched with Thy light. May we never, for lack of

insight and sympathy, look upon Thy works and see nothing of Thee in them. May our hearts be more and more filled with God, and may Thy great Name interpret for us all difficulties, strengthen us for all duties, be the very life of our joys and our consciousness.

We come to Thee with thankfulness for the many mercies which we have each received from Thee, and for the common blessings which belong to us all. And we pray that Thou wouldst help us to-day, whatever may be our special circumstances, or the burdens that any of us may have to carry, to enter into the fulness of the rest of God, and to make our own the abundant blessings stored for us in this day and in this service. Be near each of us, we pray Thee, and make our worship this morning full of power and blessing for us. May we be drawn nearer to Thee, may our eyes be opened that we may behold the things that are unseen and eternal, and so be delivered from the tyranny and the misery of the things seen and temporal.

We pray, O Lord, that Thou wouldst teach all our hearts as we bow here before Thee, and wouldst help us to enter into all the blessedness which Thou dost mean us to find in our gathering of ourselves together thus. Thou hast been our help in days that are gone by; and we would look forward with quiet hope, knowing that whatsoever the future may take away it cannot take Thee away, and knowing that from whatever we may be parted by the changes of life, and the great change of death, neither life nor death, nor things present nor things to come, can separate us from the love of God which is in Christ Jesus our Lord. May we be thus indissolubly united to that great force which moves the Universe, and may we there find our true life, our peace and joy.

O Lord! be near each of us this morning; accept us as we come to Thee now; in Thy great mercy forgive all our sins, and grant us the help of Thy Divine Spirit that our meeting together may not be in vain because it is in the Lord. Hear us, accept and answer us, we beseech Thee, for our Saviour Christ's sake.

XX

O LORD, our gracious God, Who dost give strength to them that desire it to run in the way of Thy commandments, with enlarged hearts, come to us, and give us the power to do Thy will. We beseech Thee that all these great injunctions which we have been reading may be the very guides of our lives, and may shape and mould not only our doings but our inmost selves. May our lives indeed be hid with Christ in God, and the deep roots of them strike far beneath the things that are on the earth. Help us that day by day we may increasingly set our affections and our minds by it; and seek, by effort and aspiration, the things that are above, where Christ is, sitting at the right hand of God.

O Lord! look upon us here before Thee now; give to each of us from Thine own great storehouses the special gifts that we may require not only for this hour of worship, but for the struggles and the difficulties of daily life. If any of us have any special burdens laid upon us, of endurance or of toil, do Thou help us in our work; and in our suffering give the patience which never murmurs, give the courage which never falters; may we run the race set before us; and however rough the road is, may our eyes be fixed upon Christ, Who for the joy that was set before Him endured the Cross, and despised the shame.

Help us day by day, and do Thou be near us in all the variety of our conditions and circumstances. We pray for all the sad and the burdened, for all the weak and the weary, for all the glad and the hopeful, and for each in Thy presence, that we may each hold communion with Thee, and in fellowship with Thyself may find all that we require. Give us strength for our daily duties, of whatever kind these may be, and abide with us in all the changing circumstances, that we may have the unchanging treasure in Thyself.

And now, Lord, we would commend to Thee all whom we love; all our brethren in the faith of every communion and of every land; and we beseech Thee that Christ's people may understand Him and one another better, and may be drawn nearer to each other, and may be led more and more to live the lives that He would have them live, and to show forth the praises of Him that hath called them out of darkness into His marvellous light. May all Thy professed servants be mirrors and imitators of Thee, and show forth Thy holy Name. Take us into Thy care; bless us as we wait before Thee; accept our thanks for all Thy past mercies, and still be near us and keep us, for Christ our Saviour's sake.

XXI

O LORD our God, we have not only to look to Thee for answers but also for supplications; and we beseech Thee that Thou wouldst move upon our hearts, and draw our desires away from vanities to fix them upon Thyself. We would seek most earnestly for the highest things, we would desire Thy best gifts most, and we beseech Thee that Thou wouldst listen and wouldst help us.

Set us free, O Lord, from the deceits and shows of Time. Deliver us from our tendencies to idolatry of the things seen and temporal, and from the fault which we are so prone to commit of setting the creature on the throne of the Creator, and diverting from Thee to it our love and admiration and our longing and trust.

We beseech Thee that Thou wouldst help us in our public worship. We know that if we regard iniquity in our hearts the Lord will not hear us. But though we are conscious of much that is contrary to Thy holy will, yet we bless Thee that we too can say 'Blessed be God which hath not turned away my prayer nor His mercy from me.' O Lord! Thou art near us, we believe, and Thou wilt help us. We would bring ourselves to Thee, and submit ourselves to Thy dealings, to the touches of Thy grace, and the monitions of Thy providence; and beseech Thee that one and the other may be blessed in order to bring us all nearer to Thyself, and to draw us away from the vanities of life.

O Lord! cleanse our hearts, we beseech Thee, and plant within them, dominant and deep, the highest principles of Thy Revelation, the greatest truths of Thy grace, Thy own sweetness and all-sufficiency manifested in Jesus Christ our Saviour. And grant that we may not be disobedient to the heavenly vision, but since Thou dost deign to reveal Thyself to us may our hearts be ever drawn towards that great light, and following it may we not walk in darkness, but evermore have the light that guides and leads to life. We beseech Thee to cleanse our evil, to forgive our sins, to disclose to us by that candle of the Lord which searcheth the inmost secrets of the heart all the lurking evils of which we ourselves may be unaware,

though they may be monstrous and plain to others. We ask for self-knowledge ; we pray that Thou wouldst teach us what we are ; that Thou wouldst teach us, too, what we may become ; and we beseech Thee that Thy good Spirit in us may keep us from self-complacency and from despair, and show us plainly all that we ought not to be, and all that we ought to be. We ask Thee to forgive ; we ask Thee to strengthen, to confirm, to settle, to ennoble us. And we cast our hopes and confidence upon Thee, since we bring our prayer through Him in Whom Thou hast shown us what is Thy will for the world ; and by Whose sacrifice our sins can all be taken away, and through the spirit of Whose life we too may live free from condemnation and die to sin.

We beseech Thee, then, to draw near to us this morning, and to bless each of us according to our several parts in this service. We thank Thee that Thou dost permit us thus to gather ourselves together. We pray that our assembling may never be for the worse ; always for the better. Let Thy grace descend upon us now, O Lord, and may we find that it is no vain thing to call upon the Lord.

Hear us ; accept our thanks for Thy wondrous mercy ; teach us the thankfulness that shall ever come back to give glory to God when we find ourselves suddenly possessed of great blessings, or delivered from great evils. And in all time of our tribulation, in all time of our wealth, when we are planning and purposing, when we are full of hope and anticipation, when we are struggling with the difficulties of realisation, when we are sorrowing over the irrevocable past. In all times help us to come near to Thee, in Whom all changing circumstances may be harmonised and made blessed,

and Who alone changest never, but art the same Friend and Helper of us all. We beseech Thee to hear us, to grant us Thy blessing in our worship this morning, and to accept and answer us, through Christ our Saviour.

XXII

O LORD, Who art our God and our Father, ever ready to hear us, and ever more willing to give, and to give more than we are to ask or to receive. May the abundant supplies of Thy grace not be spilled by us or wasted, or not taken up and into ourselves. We sometimes cry to Thee for what Thou hast given to us, and what we should only ask Thee to help us to take. We bless Thee that Thou dost not wait to be besought, and Thou dost forgive. We bless Thee that Thou dost not wait to be asked ere Thou dost pour out Thy quickening and sanctifying grace, but we pray that we may take the things that, before we ask, were freely given to us of God.

O Lord! we know that we have not, often not only because we fail to ask or ask amiss, but because we keep our lips closed when Thy showers of blessing are coming down on us. Forgive all our sluggishness to receive, and help us that we may open our mouths wide in the assurance that Thou wilt fill them. Strengthen us day by day for all the variety of our circumstances and duties, and if any of us are in heaviness through manifold temptations, may we find that the trial of faith is good for us even whilst it is painful, and may we learn that wonderful secret of being sorrowful yet always rejoicing. Help us, we pray Thee, not to keep our eyes on the clouds only, but on the clear sky and the bright sunshine. May we not be so engrossed by

our difficulties that we cannot see our Helper, nor ever walk with our sight glued to earth and careless of the Heaven above us. Be Thou near us, and then all things will be well with us; and our days, however burdened and laden, however sad and solitary, will not be dark, seeing that there is light in our hearts from Thee. 'In Thy light we shall see light.' May it be so with us all.

Look upon us now, help us to enter 'with joy unspeakable and full of the glory' of which we have been reading, and to take the right road to it by believing in and loving the unseen Christ. We pray Thee to help us in our worship, to speak through our lips unworthy as they are, to deliver us from all the errors and imperfections that cleave to us when we try to handle Thy holy Word, to make the motives of all who open their lips for Thee this day simple and pure, and to give to all Thy servants who speak to others their own portion in due season, that they may believe before they speak, and speak because they do believe. We pray that Thy grace may help us in hearing as well as in speaking, and that carelessness and indifference, and the urgent cries of worldly occupations and distractions may not be permitted to deaden Thy voice, or to deafen our ears; but that we may hear, and hearing may remember, and hearing and remembering may practise. Lord! be near us all as we severally require. The Lord bless each of us in our daily life and struggles; the Lord help us that we turn not aside to any 'by-ends,' nor be discouraged by any difficulties, but in peace and patience by continuance in well-doing to inherit the promises.

We commend ourselves now, O Lord, to Thy holy

keeping ; we beseech Thee to be near us according to our different necessities, conditions, and requirements. We thank Thee with one heart for the mercies received by each, and pray Thee still to be gracious to us, through Jesus Christ our Lord and Saviour.

XXIII

O LORD our God, grant, we beseech Thee, that earthly vanities may depart as we draw near in outward seeming to Thyself, and may the light divine be kindled in our hearts, and our eyes behold the Fountain of life and fire. Accept our praise, O Lord, for all Thy past mercies to us, for the light of a new day, for the sun that shines upon Thy world, for the peace and quiet of this day of the Lord, for all the associations and remembrances that it brings to us of past times when we have gone up to the house of the Lord, and for the yet more blessed remembrances that it brings of that day when Jesus Christ rose from the dead, the Conqueror for us all. We beseech Thee that, as we draw near to Thee, we may indeed find that it is no vain thing to wait upon the Lord. We thank Thee for the assurance we have that however feeble our desires, Thy heart is full of love, and Thy hands full of blessing. And we pray that Thou wouldst help us to open our hearts for the reception of what Thou dost infinitely desire to bestow upon us, and to widen our desires to the measure, if it may be, of Thine immeasurable gift.

O Lord ! we bring to Thee many weaknesses, many which we do not know, and many which we do know. We bring to Thee sins, errors and practices, habits that are contrary to Thy holy will. We bring to Thee our

feeble aspirations after good, and the often-broken resolutions which we make. We come to Thee as circled with temptations which have allies in our own weak hearts. We come to Thee knowing that we ought to long very much for what we long for very little. And yet we pray that Thou wouldst consult not so much our wishes as Thine own great heart of love to us, and that Thou wouldst 'look upon the face of Thine Anointed'; for His sake receive us, cleanse us, make us more desirous of the best things, and less desirous of the inferior ones. Help us day by day to live as we pray when we are wisest and nearest to Thee.

O Lord! we come to Thee with thanksgiving and with confession. We feel in some measure our weakness, but alas! how difficult it is for us when we speak to Thee to see it as clearly as Thou seest it, and as we sometimes see. We pray Thee to make our confessions and all our supplication very real and simple and earnest. We beseech Thee that we may not deceive ourselves, or transgress against Thee, by saying the conventional words that we have learnt from others, but may speak out of our own experience and hearts. O Lord! forgive, we pray Thee, for there is much to forgive; quicken, for there is much that is dead. Help us to be earnest, for we are often unconscious hypocrites. Teach us Thy holy will, and make that will very sweet to us; and bow ours to the glad acceptance of its yoke, and may we find it easy because it is laid upon our necks by love, the love that helps us to bear. O Lord, we pray for enlightenment, for emancipation, for new vigour to be given to what is good in us, for Thy holy and gracious Spirit to help us to suppress all that is contrary to Thy will. Teach our faint desires

to rise, and may we pass through forms and the outward signs and ceremonies, and come into the secret place of the Most High, and feel that God is near us of a truth.

And do Thou shed Thy blessing upon us in all our worship of this morning. We confess much lack of proportion of heart and mind. We feel that what is meant to be help is often hindrance, and we tarry amongst the visible things, and listen to men's words, when we ought to be passing beyond all these and coming into Thy Presence. O Lord! do Thou shed abroad Thy grace upon us as we are gathered here together, and make this service full of spiritual impulse and power to each of us. May none of us come without desire, and none of us depart without possession.

We thank Thee for all Thy great mercies to us in days gone by. We bless Thee that we can cast our care upon Thee, and we pray for grace to live as those ought to do who, though they have no continuing city, have an abiding God, and feel His presence all the more, the more they realise that here they are strangers and sojourners. Be near us now, we beseech Thee; grant us Thy help in our worship; accept our prayer, our praise, and our act of confession; and take us to Thyself, through Jesus Christ our Lord and Saviour.

XXIV

O LORD our God, we bring our emptiness to that great storehouse, Thy riches in glory in Christ Jesus, and we pray that Thou wouldst supply all our need; and since Thou hast stored more than enough in Him for each

of us, and hast put into our hands the key of the treasure-house, may we not waste Thy gifts, nor bring away a little when we might be enriched with much, nor be content with small supplies out of an infinite store.

O Lord, we draw near once more, and would desire Thy help to fulfil Thy own commandment that we may be careful for nothing, 'but in everything by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving make our requests known unto Thee.' And we beseech Thee that Thy gracious promise may be fulfilled in our quiet hearts, and that the peace of God, which passeth understanding, may keep them in Christ Jesus.

O Lord, strengthen us, we pray Thee, day by day for all Thy will concerning us, and for all work in the world. May we make a conscience of daily seeking to receive into ourselves, and to work out in all things that are lovely and of good report, the life of Jesus Christ. And help us that thus living the God of Peace may indeed be with us. We look back upon a past which we sorrowfully recognise to have been very imperfect, and often contrary to Thy holy will. But we pray that whatever may yet remain to us of this probation life here we may fill it full of holy deeds, of devout desires, of noble purposes, and strenuous resolutions, and earnest toil. We beseech Thee to be near each of us in our daily lives, to deliver us from our own weak and foolish selves, to set us free from the limitations which we bring upon our best selves by our indulgences in vanities and evil, and help us day by day to press toward the mark for the prize of the high calling of God in Christ Jesus.

O Lord, if any of us have special burdens, and have brought them here hoping to find some strength to

bear them, or some alleviation in their pressure, we pray that Thou wouldst come near to such and wouldst help them and us in our ministration and service to help them that they may be able, with renewed vigour, to set themselves to the race that is set before them, bearing the Cross of their Master. And we beseech Thee that for each of us, according to our diverse circumstances and necessities, Thy abundant grace may be poured out, and may we welcome it into our hearts, and use it for many days to come.

Be near each of us in our daily duties, strengthen us for all the conflict of life, for its disappointments and its weights, for its wearinesses and losses. And grant that, rough or smooth the path that we tread, it may be the path of righteousness which is ever the path of peace, and the right way to the City of Habitation.

We commend ourselves now to Thy gracious care. Give our feebleness strength, O Lord, we pray, and give us words to speak that may be true and mighty. Help us and all Thy servants this day who try to open their lips in Thy name; that aims may be simple, and that self may be forgotten, and the power of Christ may be magnified, and the presence and teaching of Thy Spirit felt. And let all good people who are absent from the communion of Thy saints this day have a little sanctuary wherever they are, and be able to draw near to Him Who heareth in secret, and rewardeth openly. Hear us, we beseech Thee, in these our prayers; pour Thy blessing upon us according to our several necessities, forgive all our sins, and grant us Thy gracious presence and help, through Jesus Christ our Saviour Lord.

XXV

WE, too, O Lord, would ascribe to Thee glory, humble though our voices be, amidst the praises of Eternity. And we beseech Thee that Thou wouldst breathe upon this gathered congregation this evening, and give us all to aspire after Thee, and to rejoice in Thee. May we rise above the things seen and temporal, and be brought close to Thyself, and feel that Thou indeed art with us and speaking to us. How much we have for which to praise Thee we never can measure, but we know that Thou art love, and we believe that Thou art our Father. We would recognise Thy gracious hand in common things, and pray that the daily round may not shut Thee out from us, or us from Thee, but that we may be able so to pass through, and so to use, the things temporal that finally we lose not the things eternal.

Regard us here before Thee this evening ; give us Thy blessing, for without Thee all our gathering together is as nought ; and help us in hearing and in speaking Thy word, in prayer and praise, in meditation upon Thy truth, and in all parts of this service. We bless Thee for all Thy mercy, thankfully we acknowledge Thy constant goodness, humbly we confess our own ill-desert, our often unthankfulness, our often forgetfulness, our often misuse of Thy benefits ; but we pray Thee to receive and to bless us now, through Jesus Christ our Lord and Saviour.

XXVI

WE come to Thee, O Lord, in the confidence that Thy Name is Love, and Thou hast made such confidence

easy for us by Thy many mercies to us. We feel that if we did rightly observe Thy dealings with us we should understand the loving-kindness of the Lord. We beseech Thee to help us that we may rise above all doubts and discouragements, and all in our own hearts which may make Thee our Dread, and that we may come to Thee now as children should, rejoicing to be beside their Father, and feeling that no place is so good for us as at Thy right hand.

O Lord, we bring Thee many sins for forgiveness; we do need Thy cleansing grace. We feel when we are wisest, and understand ourselves and Thee best, that we have fallen far beneath Thy purposes concerning us, and have often gone right against Thee. Lord! we have in some measure learnt that it is hard for us to kick against the pricks. Thou dost lay Thy commands upon us, and we have never broken them, but we have suffered for it. We pray Thee to help us that in days to come the deepest voice in our hearts may be 'Lord! what wilt Thou have me to do?' And we bless Thee that such a question Thou dost never leave unanswered. May our ears be acute to catch the whispers of Thy will, and so not need its thunders. May we dwell in Thee, and love the Commander so much that we delight in all that He commands. We pray for more of that love in our hearts which is 'the fulfilling of the Law,' and we beseech Thee that Thou wouldst help each of us here to open our hearts for the entrance of Thy love, that it may constrain us with the sweet constraint of swift obedience.

O Lord! Thou knowest all our circumstances, our weaknesses, our work, our difficulties, our duties. Thou seest many struggling hearts before Thee, and some sad ones. We beseech Thee that Thou wouldst

be near us all, and if in any measure or manner we may be learning the vanity of things here below, and may be called upon to walk in darkness, with sorrows gnawing at our hearts, or anxiety, come Thou to us, we pray Thee, and strengthen us that we may apprehend Thy loving purpose even in the darkness, and that the night may be light about us. If any of us are fighting with temptation, and ready to yield, O Lord, confirm the feeble hands, and strengthen Thy servants that they may stand fast though in slippery places. Do thou come to each of us as we severally require. We cannot speak each other's specific wants. We thank Thee that whatever be our necessities there is infinite fulness in Thee, and that Thou hast the bandages and the balm for every wound, light for all darkness, guidance for the perplexed, strength for the weak, hope for the downcast, and a Christ for every one of us. We pray that our service may, in some cases, and in some measure in all, help us to take firmer hold of that great love which is brought to us all in the Saviour of the world, and that we may all be indeed His servants.

Be with us when we try to speak a word in Thy Name; take away all unfitness, imperfection, and weakness; and give us some message which may be felt to be Thy message, and bring forth fruit that shall be found after many days unto Thy praise and glory.

Now, Lord, we commend ourselves to Thy gracious care; we beseech Thee to be near us, to bless us all, and now to accept and answer us, through Christ our Saviour.

XXVII

O LORD our Father, Who art ready to hear us always, we beseech Thee for the Spirit of supplication. And since we know not what to pray for as we ought, we ask before all else that that Spirit which maketh intercession in us may move on our heart's desires now, and may help us to covet earnestly the best gifts, and to trust perfectly that when we ask we shall receive. O Lord! we need Thy gracious help, for our hearts are very weak, and we are ever turning aside to earthly things and to creatures; and making these, which are meant to help us towards Thee, barriers to shut us out from Thee. We pray Thee for that good Spirit of adoption whereby we may indeed cry to Thee as to our Father, and may feel that Thy fatherly love is very real, and is possessed by us. Give us that Holy Spirit of promise whereby we may be withdrawn from all earthly and sinful desires, and sealed unto the day of redemption. Give us that strong spirit by which we shall overcome all our difficulties, conquer all our foes, be fit for all our work, and be strengthened with might within for every part of Thy purpose and command. Give us, we beseech Thee, that Spirit of truth which shall guide us into all truth, setting us free from our errors, delivering us from our prejudices, taking away from us all false thoughts and false desires, and teaching us to cleave to, and to love, and to live by, the truth as it is in Jesus. Give us, we pray Thee, that tender Spirit that our souls may be purged from all the harshness and hardness of self-regard, and made gentle and full of compassion and of all loving-kindness. May we thus be imitators of God as beloved children, and walk in love as Thou also hast loved us.

Regard us as we are here before Thee this morning ; and shed abroad upon us, gathered together thus, Thy gracious influences that all our deadness may be quickened, our slothfulness stirred up, and all that is within us be led to praise and trust the living, loving God. We thank Thee for all Thy gracious mercies and gifts to us ; we beseech Thee to be near us in our worship of this morning. We commend all whom we love, and one another, to Thy gracious care and keeping now, and beseech Thee to accept and bless and strengthen us, through Jesus Christ our Lord and Saviour.

XXVIII

O LORD, our gracious Father, let that 'rushing mighty wind' bring life to us too, we beseech Thee, and make the tongues of fire be ours ; and that gracious gift, of which these are but the emblems, to be realised in all its greatness, by Thy professing servants. Thou hast taught us that if any man have not the Spirit of Christ he is none of His. Give us more fully to possess, more earnestly to desire, more faithfully to use, that divine gift. And may the life, and the law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus, make us free from the law of sin and death. We beseech Thee to regard each of us here in Thy presence this morning ; and to grant to us, according to all the variety of our characters and conditions, the gifts that Thou seest we most need, not so much for happiness as for godlikeness and holiness.

O Lord ! strengthen us day by day to take up the burden of the day, and to receive the gifts which Thou dost mean for the day. We thank Thee that Thou dost draw near to us all, and art waiting to bless and be gracious. And we beseech Thee that we may not shut

our hearts against Thy greatest mercies, but may ever bring Thee near to ourselves by fervour of desire and by faithfulness of service. We thank Thee for all Thy blessings to us in the days that are gone by. We beseech Thee that Thou Who hast been our help wouldst still be with us and strengthen us, and wouldst fulfil Thine own promises that Thou wilt not leave the souls that put their trust in Thee until Thou hast done unto them that Thou hast spoken to them of. We bless Thee that we have the assurance that we need never be left alone. Help us to set the Lord always at our right hands, and then do Thou keep us amidst the slippery paths of life, and at the last set us at Thy right hand, where there is fulness of joy and pleasures for evermore.

We beseech Thee for Thy blessing on our service of this morning. We would cast ourselves on Thy gracious promises, encouraged by the remembrance of many past times when Thou hast blessed the provisions of Thy house, and satisfied us with the goodness of Thy holy place. We thank Thee for days gone by in which Thou hast drawn near to us as we have gathered together. We pray that Thou wouldst be with us once more, and still wouldst help us, and pour out of Thy blessing upon hearers and upon speaker. And grant that whatever else this service may accomplish, or may fail in achieving, it may be successful in bringing us into closer fellowship with Thyself, and make more assured and deep and constant our possession of Thy holiest gifts.

Bless us in our daily lives, go with us in our conflicts and struggles and toils, and in all our enjoyments and pleasures and gladnesses, and in all our rest. And grant, we beseech Thee, that through all the variety of

our earthly conditions we may be brought to a firmer, a more assured possession of Thyself, and may be changed into Thy likeness from glory to glory.

O Lord, we pray for all Christian communities, for all Thy servants in the world, for all who are seeking to bless their fellows, for all honest earnest workers for God and man ; and pray that motives may be purified and elevated, and methods may be wise and suitable, and that Thy blessing may come down upon all the work of Thy people in every form.

We beseech Thee to abide with us in what remains of this service, for the sake of Jesus Christ our Saviour.

XXIX

O LORD, we would come with thanksgiving for that Angel of the Covenant in Whom Thou hast set Thy Name. And we bless Thee that in that Name which is above every Name we have all and abound. We beseech Thee that in mind and heart we may more and more explore and possess the treasures of wisdom and knowledge, grace and peace, power and patience, liberty and love, and joy, which are laid up for us in Christ our Lord. And we ask Thee to help us this morning that we may bring ourselves, with all our needs and emptiness, into contact with Thyself, with Thy fulness and all-sufficiency. Give us, O Lord, we pray Thee, strength for our weakness, light in our darkness, liberty in our bondage, life in our death, and all that we need. And help us to take the things that are freely given to us of God, and to experience more and more how true it is that Christ, and God in Christ, have more than enough for heart and mind, for will and strength.

We come to Thee, O Lord, with thankfulness for all Thy manifold mercies to us, by which Thou dost brighten every day, by which Thou dost reveal Thyself to us, if only our eyes were open to behold Thee, at every moment, and in every circumstance. We confess that we have often stayed our thoughts and vision on Thy creatures and Thy gifts, that we have often allowed these to shut Thee out from our thankfulness and from our hearts. But we beseech Thee that Thou wouldst help us in time to come to see through the things that are seen and temporal, and by their help to see more clearly the things that are unseen and eternal, instead of finding that the present is a veil to hide from us the realities at Thy right hand. We acknowledge our shortsightedness, and how often we have yielded to the temptation to forget Thee in Thy works, and lose sight of the Giver in the very enjoyment of His gifts. But we ask Thee that Thou wouldst draw near us, and help us to keep ourselves near to Thee, that the world may be more and more filled with God to us; and a very common sight be, as it were, the bush that burned and is not consumed, aflame with God.

O Lord, regard us here before Thee this morning. We thank Thee for permitting us to gather together thus, and we believe that Thou wilt draw near to seeking souls as Thou ever hast done. And we pray that in our minds and hearts there may be the desire and the feeling after Thee which is no more 'if haply we may find Thee,' but is the assured search of those who know where to get what they seek, and know that what they seek they will assuredly find. May it be so with us. We are not straitened in Thee, we know, but we have often limited Thy power to give Thyself

to us by the narrowness of our desires, the feebleness of our expectations, the coldness of our confidence, the tremulousness of our faith. We beseech Thee to forgive all these imperfections in our seeking after Thee, and to shame and surprise us by the large gifts which Thou dost give even to us; that we may have Thee in full possession, and rejoice in the possession, and be thereby quickened and heartened to expect more from Thee, and to seek it in Thy own appointed way.

O Lord, forgive our many sins; we beseech Thee to draw near to us now; in Thy grace and mercy quicken and help us that our worship may be of real service to ourselves, and truly acceptable to Thee, through Jesus Christ our Lord and Saviour.

XXX

O LORD, gracious and longsuffering, grant, we beseech Thee, that none of us may fail to possess that blessing which Christ has come to bestow upon us too, in turning away every one of us from his iniquities. We pray for clean hearts, we pray for grace to discern, and to detest, and to dislodge from our hearts all the evils that may lurk there, and which often are unknown to ourselves; and pour upon us all the good Spirit which Christ has come to impart, that by that fire, kindled in our hearts, the dross may be melted and run away from us, and we be as silver tried in the fire.

O Lord! we need, and we daily feel that we need, the succour of Thy mighty power, and the cleansing of Thy purifying Spirit; for day by day temptations are brought to bear upon us, and day by day we are pressed upon with duties and cares too great and too heavy to be undertaken, and to be upborne by our own

unaided strength. But we would cast ourselves on Thy mercy, Who dost never send Thy servants a warfare at their own charges, and dost always give what Thou dost command to them who seek Thy face. Strengthen us then, we beseech Thee, day by day, to run with patience the race that is set before us, and to tread firmly in the footsteps of the Captain of our salvation. Regard each of us according to our several requirements. If there are any among us who may have special cause of thankfulness to Thee for restoring and healing mercy, we beseech Thee to accept our praise, and to help us to devote to Thee lives which Thou hast continued to us. If there are any of us that are in sorrow, and bearing heavy hearts into Thy presence, speak, we beseech Thee, peace and consolation to Thy children, and grant that none of us may put away from ourselves either the lessons of our sorrows, or the healing of them which Thou art ready to give. And do Thou help us all, day by day, in the variety of our circumstances and duties, to set the Lord always before us, and to glorify His Name in our daily lives.

We commend to Thee all that we love. We pray for all Christian people in all churches and forms of faith wherever there are true hearts that love Jesus Christ and desire to serve Him; we pray that the light may broaden and greaten for them, and that we and they may all be drawn nearer to our Master and made able to apprehend more fully in our minds, and to reproduce more fully in our lives, the lessons of Thy great gospel.

We beseech Thee to bless all work done in the world for the spread of the Name of Christ and the glory of His Kingdom, and that Thou wouldst bless all Thy

servants who are at work in divers places throughout the world, in seeking to establish that Kingdom which is 'righteousness and peace and joy in the Holy Spirit.' Hear us, we pray Thee ; in Thy great mercy forgive us ; grant us larger blessings than we ask or expect, and help us in this hour of worship, through Jesus Christ our Lord and Saviour.

XXXI

O LORD, Thou art good and ready to forgive and plenteous in mercy to all that call upon Thee. So we come to Thee, claiming our portion in these great blessings which flow to men from Thy goodness and readiness to pardon, and abundance in mercy for all. Help us, we beseech Thee, in the depths of our hearts and not merely with our tongues, to call upon Thee. We bless Thee that Thou hast taught us Thy Name, and that we speak not to an unknown power, but to the God and Father of us, because the God and Father of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ. Help us, O God, we beseech Thee, then, to draw near to Thee like children, loving, trusting, not afraid, and feeling the blessedness that the good hand of the good Father is upon us for good. We look back upon ourselves, and our past, and we come with all its imperfections and our stains, and beseech Thee that Thou wouldst turn away our hearts from vanities, and wouldst help us day by day, with increasing decision, concentration, and success, to war against our own evil, and to make our own the large blessings which Thou hast sent for the world in Thy spirit of holiness.

Help us, we pray Thee, Lord, that we may indeed be Thy servants, devoted to Thee, calling upon Thee, and

trusting in Thee, and living according to Thy commandments. And then give us, we pray Thee, all the blessings which then we shall be fit to receive, and bestow upon us larger and constantly increasing gifts of Thy grace and mercy. We need Thy pardoning love; we thank Thee that we can believe that before we call Thou dost answer, and that Thou art in Christ reconciling the world to Thyself, not imputing unto them their trespasses.

O Lord! help each of us rightly to understand our need of a pardoning God, and joyfully to accept the pardon which Thou dost send us. We pray that none of us may cling to our evil, and none of us bear about with us consciences either speaking reproach or dumb seers, but that they may testify for us, having received from Thyself the assurance that Thou art pacified towards us, for all that we have done. And, O Lord, surely we need more than forgiveness. We wish, when we are wisest, to be set free from the dissensions and the dominion of our own evil, and to be strengthened to resist the manifold temptations which our weakness finds even in Thy best gifts.

O Lord, help us, we pray Thee, drawing ever nearer to Thyself, to be ever further away from the desire to transgress Thy loved will. And may it seem to us more and more to be sweeter to be in harmony with Thy purposes, and to yield ourselves to Thee—be sweeter than any other sweetness that the world can give. We have had enough of trial to drink from bitter streams. We pray Thee that we may treasure in our inmost convictions the assurance that it is a bitter, as well as an evil, thing to sin against the living, loving God, and may carry with us that conviction when we need it most—when fiery temptations assail

us, and our own weakness is ready to surrender ; then we pray Thee come to us and help us. Set our feet upon the rock, and establish our goings, and may we become capable of receiving such sustained strength because we have a wholesome and wise distrust of our own. It is when we say that our feet had well-nigh gone that Thou dost stretch out Thine hand to hold us up.

This morning we beseech Thee to look upon us as we gather together professing to seek Thy face. May it be our real purpose when we come together thus, and whatever other motives may have their right place in drawing us together now, grant, we beseech Thee, that high above them all, and more conscious to ourselves than any of them, may be the wish that our fainting good may be strengthened, and our spirits, wearied and worn with contact with the world through another week, may once again receive food for many days, in the strength of which we may go forth again to-morrow to our tasks.

We beseech Thee to be very near each of us in our worship. We thank Thee for that great truth commemorated by all Thy people this day, the Resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead, in which all our death both of body and of spirit is abolished, and in which life and immortality, life here, life in union with God, life hereafter in blessedness for evermore, are sealed and certified to faithful souls. May we each enter into all the joy and the power of the Resurrection of Jesus Christ. And may we too, in our measure and degree, reckon ourselves also to be dead indeed unto sin and alive to God through Jesus Christ our Lord. In Him we pray Thee to accept all our petitions.

XXXII

O LORD, our God, we thank Thee that we can cry Abba! Father! Our Saviour prayed so in His agony, and we bless Thee that through Him we too become sons of God, and can take that great Name on our lips with joy and filial confidence. Help us then, we pray Thee, that we may all, by humble faith and true obedience, enter into the liberty and the glory of being the children of God. And do Thou deliver us thereby from bondage, from servile fear, from all doubt, and dark thoughts of Thee, and make us feel that we are heirs of God and joint heirs with Jesus Christ. Lord! truly Thou art our Portion, and though we have often behaved as though Thou wert not ours and we not Thine, yet in our deepest hearts we have been sure that there is no abiding for any of us except in possessing God. We pray Thee that this conviction may be deepened in us, and that we may more and more claim and possess the riches of the glory of our inheritance in Thee, and may carry into all our daily life the assurance that we have Thee for our enduring substance and our righteousness.

Give us, we beseech Thee, the help which Thou knowest we sorely need, and we hope though feebly we all sincerely seek. Teach us to understand the great depths of Thy law, and to see more than we ever have seen, the revelation of Thyself in Jesus Christ. And may that great message, which we venture to take upon our lips to proclaim, be given to the speaker in its purity, and come to the hearers in its power. We pray that Thou wouldst help us all, bowing here before Thee this morning, and coming in contact with Thy word and will, to bow our hearts and

minds, and not only our hearts and minds, but to regulate and conform all our action to what we know to be the good and acceptable and perfect will of God.

We beseech Thee to bless each of us in our daily struggle and pilgrimage, teach our hands to war and our fingers to fight, be the covering of our heads in the day of battle. May no sin have dominion over us, and no evil thing lead us captive. May we be more than conquerors through Him that loved us ; and grant, we pray Thee, that into all the darkness of the darkest life there may shine the bright hope, the hope of immortality. We pray Thee to give us patience to wait for all which Thou dost give us faith to expect, and we pray that our waiting may not be indolent, but that we may ever be trying, day by day, to bring into our lives, characters, and conduct more and more of the powers of the world to come.

O Lord, bless each of us in our several spheres of service and duty, in all the various relationships of life, in all the tasks and trials and joys which Thou dost give us. May they all tend to bring us nearer to Thyself. Make us masters of the world because we are the servants of God, and may we find Thee everywhere because we take Thee everywhere. And if any of us have special burdens, and seem to ourselves to stand in special need of Thy help, shape Thy gifts, O Lord, according to our necessities, and give to each of us that which we most need in order to get the highest good out of everything that befalls us.

We pray for all Christian people, for all communities of such. We pray that Thou wouldst strengthen the hands and purify the hearts of Thy servants, and that Christian men by Christian lives may, in their own spheres, be the apostles of Jesus Christ. And now we

beseech Thee to bless us, to forgive all our sins, and to grant us Thy help and presence as we worship this morning, through Jesus Christ our Lord and Saviour.

XXXIII

O LORD, our gracious Father, and ever-present and loving Friend, draw us, we beseech Thee, near to Thyself now, for we feel that we need Thy help to lift up our hearts' desires to Thee, and to leave behind and beneath us the things of time and sense. Pour into our minds some clear and blessed thoughts of Thyself, not only in Thy glory but in Thy gentleness which makes us great. And fulfil Thine own promises of speaking to our hearts that they may return loving answers to Thee. We feel, O Lord, that the cares of this world, and the necessary duties that have come upon us, have too often drawn us away from Thee; and we gather this morning wearied with our day's work, and finding it hard to rise above our ordinary selves, and to enter into Thy presence. O Lord,

‘Kindle a flame of sacred love
In these cold hearts of ours.’

And help us now to gather ourselves together, and turn our faces to seek the Lord.

We bless Thee, Father, for all Thy mercies to us. Surely Thou dost seek to draw us to Thyself lovingly, with wise surprises in Thy mercy, and wonders in Thy continual grace besetting us behind and before. We beseech Thee that we may recognise more fully the movements of Thy hand in all our daily affairs, and be concerned to find out the deepest meaning of these, and to draw from them the highest blessings. And may we always believe and feel that they are working

together for our good, and that the will of God in them all is our sanctification. O cleanse our hearts, and help us to cleanse them ; strengthen in us all the feeble good, and cast out all the strong evil.

Give us, O Lord, the grace to live according to our highest thoughts, and make these highest thoughts more in accordance with Thy holy will, and Thy blessed manifestations of Thyself. Teach us the rigid and wise judgment of ourselves. May we examine ourselves, to find there all that is discordant with Thy holy will and therefore disturbing our peace and rest, and give us grace to cast it out. We are very apt to read ourselves wrongly, and leniently to interpret our own faults and failures ; and because they are ours, and natural to us, they blind our eyes and silence our consciences often. We pray for a clearer vision of all we ought to be, and might be. May no self-love ever come between us and the clear sight of duty and transgression. Help us day by day to labour as those who have received Thy forgiving love, and to make ourselves less unworthy of Thy mercy, and more capable of receiving it.

O Lord, we beseech Thee to lift up all our hearts into the full blessedness of this hour of worship. May it not be to us a mere form, or a task, but the very gate of Heaven. Grant that, as we bow before Thee now, the presence of our brethren may help our feebleness. Grant that the cares that infest us may steal away, and be lost to our consciousness ; and that we may feel the realities which we so often forget, and understand better that great love which we so often neglect and put away from us.

Draw near to us now in the fulness of Thy grace, the largeness of Thy pity, the tender compassion of Thy promises ; and in Thy faithfulness give to each of us as

we severally require, making this an hour of true communion with Thyself, in which we shall see the things that are, and grasp in hope the things that shall be hereafter. In Thy great mercy hear, answer, and bless us, for our Lord Christ's sake.

XXXIV

O LORD, our gracious Father, Who hast revealed Thy love to us, help us to answer it with our love to Thee. And since Thou hast taught us to call Thee our Father, may we, in the consciousness of Thy love and fatherhood, be imitators of God, as beloved children, and walk in love.

We thank Thee, O Father, for all which Thou dost give to Thy servants to help them to grow like Thee. We pray that we may rightly use and faithfully employ all these great gifts of Thine, so that day by day we may be tending nearer to being perfect as our Father in Heaven is perfect. Thou knowest our weakness; we beseech Thee for the large hope and the great aim and possibility which such commandments, being promises as well as commandments, set before the feeblest of us. We ask Thee, Lord, that we may rise to the height of the possibilities which Thou dost open to us, and may increasingly and daily be approaching Thyself, and receiving into ourselves more and more of the likeness of the heavenly. Help us to put off all ancient evil, and to put on that new nature after the image of Him that created us. And grant, we beseech Thee, to each of us so to use circumstances, callings, duties, as that these may all tend, in some measure, to our bearing the image of Jesus Christ our Lord in Whom is Thine image.

O Lord, whatever may be the thoughts that have been busy in our minds ere we entered into Thy house, and however unworthy we may be to handle such holy things as we here come into contact with, do Thou graciously help each of us that we may get some strength for daily work, some insight into Thy truth, some clear knowledge of ourselves, some happy confidence in Thee, by our gathering together thus. And may our profiting appear unto all men, and our daily lives bear witness for us concerning the motives by which, and the Example after which, we seek to regulate our lives.

Help us in all our common work, O Lord; to carry into it the spirit of Thy children, and do the least thing from the greatest principles, and bring all the force and the glory of Thy truth to bear on all the trifles of our daily commonplace routine. Be with any of us that may have more than the ordinary course of familiar life to face to-day, whether it be in regard of greater duties than ordinary, or with deeper anxieties and more gnawing sorrows than, thank God! fall to the lot of most of us in most of our lives. Whatever be our burdens, do Thou help us to bear them, and help us to cast them upon Thee to bear them. And grant, we beseech Thee, that disciplined by sorrow and by joy, and taught by all the changes of life, we may in them all hear the great voice which says to us, 'Come up hither, and dwell in the unchanging realm of love and purity with God.'

We beseech Thee to comfort them that need consolation, to direct such as are in want of guidance, to clear the paths of those whose ways may be encumbered with many hindrances; and to make us all willing to learn by Thy providences, and to see in our daily life

Thy providences, as well as to learn by Thy grace and word.

And now, Lord, we commend ourselves, and all whom we love, and all our brethren who hold the Head, and profess and call themselves Christians, to Thy gracious care, beseeching Thee that Thou wouldst lead them, and help them to lead the world, into paths of righteousness and peace. Bless, we pray Thee, all honest work done for Thee and for men, and help all those to whom Thou hast entrusted any precious things of mind or estate to impart these to their fellows, and to feel that Thou dost give to them Thy grace in its manifold forms, that through them it may pass to all others.

Now, Lord, we would commit ourselves to Thy care, and beseech Thee to be near us and help us in our worship, and accept it, and accept us, through Jesus Christ our Lord and Saviour.

XXXV

O LORD, Thou art the giving God, and when we ask ourselves what shall we render unto the Lord for all His benefits towards us, we bless Thee that Thou hast taught us the answer, that we shall take the cup of salvation, and call upon the Name of the Lord. We bless Thee that Thou dost delight in us when we come to Thee empty-handed, lifting up our empty hands to Heaven that they may be filled, our stained hands that they may be cleansed.

We would come to Thee, now, O Lord, in the confidence that Thou art ever giving from Thy fulness, and dost rejoice in us when we receive Thy gifts remembering the Giver. O Lord, bestow upon us all those holy desires, all that lowly consciousness of our own emptiness, all that triumphant confidence in Thy fulness, and

Thy loving delight in giving Thyself to us which Thou dost rejoice to see in us, and wilt impart to us when we are seeking Thee. We thank Thee that before we call Thou dost answer, and that so often we have found it true that whilst we are yet speaking Thou wilt hear. We bless Thee that even we, without presumption, can come into Thy presence when we stand praying believing that we have the things which we desire. Surely there is nothing which Thou dost desire more than that we shall let Thee give us Thyself, and surely whatever wishes may be disappointed there is a region in which to ask is to have, and to have more exceeding abundantly than we can ask or think. Lead us, then, we pray Thee, into that safe region where desire can move unfearing; and bestow upon us all, in such measure as shall make us ashamed of our diffidence and our small petitions, the very fulness of Thy gracious self.

We thank Thee, O Lord, that Thou hast already drawn near to us, and given to the world and to each of us that in which all sweets lie compacted, and all needs are more than supplied. May we have that rejoicing, filial confidence which shall always say, 'My God shall supply all our needs, through His riches in glory in Christ Jesus.' We come to Thee with many necessities, but most of all we need Thee. We pray for purifying, we pray for strengthening, we pray that our feet may be kept firm even when in slippery places. We pray for self-knowledge, for self-distrust, for confidence in the better self which Thou dost breathe into the spirits of Thy children, and we beseech Thee that day by day our experience may enlarge with our desires, and we may have and long more for more and more of the fulness that is in God.

O Lord, cleanse us from our evil, deliver us from our foolish loves, and false desires, and vain hopes, and aimless struggles in which we are tempted to pass so much of our lives. And give to us a more rooted, firmer, and more powerful and transforming conviction that Thou art our Portion and our Joy, and that possessing Thee we may reach to all the intents of bliss. We beseech Thee to forgive our wanderings and shortcomings, our rebellions and murmurings, our postponing the best things to the inferior things, and the greater ardour with which our hearts go out after Time than that with which they launch themselves into the great Eternity. Oh do Thou fit us, day by day, for the discharge of every duty, for the facing of all circumstances, for the conflicts over every evil. We beseech Thee that Thou wouldst search our inmost parts as with the candle of the Lord, and tell us what Thou hast found there of evil. Speak to our consciences, Lord ; make them more sensitive to all that is contrary to Thy will, and more firm in their proclamation to us of our own evil deserts. Preserve us from deceiving ourselves by the outward forms and professions of godliness, and deliver us from all temptations to lower the standard of our living according to those around us, or ever to make it less than Thy will, which is our sanctification. May we be holy as Thou art holy, and in that fear of the Lord which is full of blessedness may we perfect our holiness.

We thank Thee that for many of us there are precious memories of past seasons of blessedness, when we have met Thee here, strong in our hearts. And whilst we praise Thee for all the past blessings of our union in worship, we beseech Thee that Thou wouldst still be near us, and wouldst help us now, and strengthen us as

we bow here before Thee; that we may indeed leave behind cares and sorrows and purposes and aims, and only remember all these in so far as they may make more grateful to us this day of the Lord, and our gathering together in Thy Name; and may make us feel more our need for help, to be received here, and for meat in the strength of which we may go for many days. We pray Thee to be near us. We thank Thee for all Thy mercies; in everything by prayer and supplication, not forgetting thanksgiving, we would make our requests known unto Thee, and beseech Thee that on Thy part Thou wilt fulfil Thy promises, in so far as we have fulfilled the conditions, and to grant that the peace of God which passes understanding may now be keeping our hearts and minds in Christ Jesus. For His sake grant it, Lord.

XXXVI

GIVE us, O Lord, we beseech Thee, strength and courage, faithfulness to confess Christ before men; and may we have Him in our hearts the very joy of our lives, and Him before us the aim of all our living. We beseech Thee that Thou wouldst abide with us day by day, amidst all the various duties and difficulties of this life; and help us, by actions and words, to make known Whose we are and Whom we serve. We pray for faithfulness, for meekness, and for courage; we pray that the peace of God in our hearts may rule, and sit there as umpire, and so deliver us from all the delusions as to what may be allowable for us, and may make us strong to do and to fight. Help us to be wise as serpents, and harmless as doves. May Thy Spirit abide

in us, and always prepare us for any obstacles that we may encounter. And we beseech Thee that through all we, Thy poor servants, who are so feeble and irresolute, may be made strong in the Lord and in the power of His might.

Help us, day by day, in our work; be with each of us according to our various necessities and circumstances; fit us for our various tasks, of whatever sort they may be. May we carry Thy Name into them all; may all life tend to make our possession of Thee more assured; and may we thereby be exercised and disciplined, and so prepared for the better and more perfect life which this leads towards. If any of us have need of Thy special help by reason of heavy tasks, perplexing circumstances, sore temptations, or gnawing anxieties, or sorrows that weigh us down, Thou wouldst be near such, and according to all the variety of our necessities wouldst shape Thy manifold grace in which there is more than sufficient for our deepest needs. And we pray, O Lord, that Thou wouldst help us to understand where our true comfort and our true strength are. And if in anything we need consolation, O Lord, preserve us from seeking it in the broken cisterns which can hold no water. And help us to turn to the Father of mercies, and the God of all comfort, Whose consolations are neither few nor small. Help us to be Thy faithful, humble, loving, lowly servants and soldiers till our life's end. May like blessings rest upon all Thy servants throughout the world; and whatever in individuals or in communities may stand in the way of the full knowledge of Thy will, and the full possession of Thy grace, may these hindrances be swept away, so that all Thy people may be more worthy to be Thy witnesses in the world, and their testimony sound out clear and full

among men, making known to the ends of the earth the salvation of our God.

O Lord, make all good people better, bring them nearer to Thyself, strengthen the hands of all workers for God and men, enlighten them to know what the world needs most, and strengthen them to bear the true message of love and peace unto all dark and saddened souls.

We desire to commend to Thee our Sovereign, our country, all rulers, all persons who can influence opinion and action in this and other lands. We pray that peace may prevail in our time, and that those who delight in war may be suppressed and scattered. We ask Thee that Thou wouldst further Thine own gracious promises, and hasten the time when the kingdoms of this world may be the kingdoms of our Lord and Saviour, Jesus Christ. Hear us, and grant us Thy blessing, for His sake.

XXXVII

GIVE us, O Lord, we beseech Thee, the spirit of prayer, and help us to be aware of Thy presence, and to lift up confident desires and desiring confidence unto Thee, the Friend and Giver of all good. We beseech Thee for Thy blessing to come down upon this congregation, and we pray that our hour of worship this evening may avail to make us see more clearly, and feel more the importance of, the things that are unseen and eternal.

O Lord, let Thy presence be with us. May the glory of the Lord be in our midst, and the power of the Lord be present to heal them that have need of healing. We thank Thee for all Thy past mercies to us;

and beseech Thee that, as the crown of them all, Thou wouldst help us to possess grateful hearts that love Thee for Thy love's sake, and yield ourselves to Thee in obedience and trust because we love. Forgive, accept, hear, and answer us, through Jesus Christ our Lord.

XXXVIII

DRAW near to us, O Lord, we beseech Thee, in Thy great mercy, and help us to draw near with full filial faith to Thy Fatherly heart. We bring to Thee many burdens which Thou only canst help us to bear, for to all of us love is a struggle, and we have daily to fight and endure, and to put forth effort. And we turn to Thee, and beseech Thee that Thou wouldst draw near to each of us, in all the various duties and conflicts, difficulties and trials, tasks and circumstances, which Thy providence appoints for us. Help us, we beseech Thee, to recognise Thy presence in all things, and to feel that the smallest of our duties is enjoined us by Thee; and that he who is faithful in that which is least, and he only, will be faithful in that which is much.

We thank Thee, O Lord, that when we know our weakness most we may be the nearest to Thy divine strength; and we pray that Thy power may be made perfect in our weakness; and that whatsoever Thy providence appoints or Thy will enjoins, we may, by Thy help, be able to accept and to do. Go with us, we beseech Thee, into all our daily duties; may we carry the light of Thy countenance into them all. May we do everything as realising that we are in Thy presence Whose will is that we should be perfect. We thank

Thee that Thou dost not send us a warfare at our own charges. Come to us with Thy power, and then we shall be more than conquerors through Him that loveth us. Regard each of us here before Thee; Thou knowest our deepest needs, whether we know them or not. We bless Thee that however various may be our characters and wants there is all-sufficiency for all of us, and more than enough for a universe, in Thyself. If any of us have any special need of Thy help, either to comfort, or to sustain, or to direct, draw near to such, we pray Thee, with Thy consolations, which are neither few nor small. Thy hand is tender, and never wounds when it tries to bind up, as ours are so often apt to do.

We beseech Thee that the great consolations which come to those who submit and accept Thy will may belong to all of us, who may have any special burdens of sorrow, of perplexity, or of duty, to carry. And we beseech Thee that if any of us have to face great temptations, Thou wouldst be near such; and if our temptations are the continually recurring clouds of small ones, be with us then.

O Lord, look upon all the young persons in this congregation, the young men who may be here in this city alone, and in slippery places. May they feel that Thou art with them, not only to know what they do, but to help them to do what Thou dost desire. And if any of them have fallen into evil, we beseech Thee that Thy grace may be realised by such, and may deliver them from the snare of the fowler and from the noisome pestilence.

We pray for Thy blessing to rest upon us as we try to meditate together upon Thy word and will, and beseech Thee that Thou wouldst help us, giving us a

portion for all this congregation. And do Thou help us to speak Thy word as it ought to be spoken, with earnestness, and full faith with simplicity. And may the power of God flow through our poor words, and the manifestation of Thy Spirit be granted to our worship this evening.

O Lord, draw many hearts to Thyself, we pray Thee ; and shine into many spirits with the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ.

We pray Thee to bless all good people, all Christian souls who may be seeking to do Thy will, all the communities and churches of such. And grant that all Thy servants may have a larger measure of Thy divine Spirit, and may be walking more closely in the footsteps of the great Shepherd of all the flock. We pray Thee to hear the prayers which have gone up in many tongues and lands this day, and in answer to pour out upon Thy waiting people the graces that they need for the work of the world, for life and for death. Hear us, O Lord ; mercifully accept us ; forgive all our sins, and grant us the consciousness of Thy presence, for the sake of Jesus Christ our Lord and Saviour.

XXXIX

GIVE us, O Lord, we beseech Thee, the spirit of supplication ; knowing our need and believing in Thy sufficiency and Thy love, may we come to Thee as with our empty vessels to the ever-springing fountain, and with joy draw water from the wells of salvation. We thank Thee that however feeble are our desires, Thou art waiting to be gracious, and art able to give us exceeding abundantly above all that we can ask.

We thank Thee that however tremulous our faith Thy faithfulness is as the Rock of Ages. We bless Thee that our very deserts do not stand in the way of Thy great mercy. And so, O Lord, we come to Thee, compassed with infirmity, because Thou art strong; and when tempted to yield to sin, because Thou art righteous. We come to Thee, for Thou art our Father, and Thy mercy endureth for ever. Give us then, we beseech Thee, whatever we may each severally require now; and help us, in the triumphant confidence of faith, to put far away from us all fear, all indifference, all coldness, and to press near Thyself, that into our hearts there may come the very life of God, in the plenitude of its power. Cleanse us, we beseech Thee, from all our evil; lift us from our low estate; our souls cleave unto the dust. Quicken Thou us according to Thy word, O Lord. We need Thee in order that we may truly desire Thee, and we need Thee to make us fit to possess Thee. And so we cast ourselves on Thee for everything, and pray that as from Thee come the preparation of the heart and the answer Thou wouldst give us both now.

We have to acknowledge before Thee many shortcomings, and we feel that our confession is faulty as that which it confesses. But do Thou teach us, we beseech Thee, a deeper and a clearer consciousness of our own defects and shortcomings; and may we realise more fully than ever we have done, not only our responsibility to Thee for all, but that great pattern of perfectness which Thou hast given, and which it is possible for us to attain. May we be intolerant of all shortcomings and failures. May we be rigid and righteous judges of ourselves. May we have no secret sins lurking in our characters or diffused through our

conduct without our knowledge. May our desires be quickened after perfect holiness. May we be making daily progress in the life that is drawn from, and is like unto, the life of Jesus Christ. Whatsoever we do may we do it as to the Lord. May we bring Thee into all our acts, and walk before Thee, and so be perfect.

Help us that we may find it no vain thing to wait upon the Lord, but may we be aware of a mighty power raising us above the lowness of our daily lives, and bringing into clearer vision and more solid reality the things that are at Thy right hand where Christ is sitting, our Forerunner and our Friend. Thankfully we recognise the mercy which permits us thus to assemble and help and strengthen one another; may the one spirit be diffused throughout this congregation, and may we receive our portion in due season from those liberal hands that satisfy the desire of every living thing, from that loving Heart that fulfils the desires of them that fear Him. Hear us, grant Thy blessing, quicken each of us by the touch of Thy divine hand, through Jesus Christ our Saviour.

XL

O LORD, our gracious Father, it is good to draw near unto Thee, and we would come with our empty hands, and pray for the blessings which Thou dost delight to give even more than we to receive them. Teach us how to pray, we beseech Thee, and make us aware of our necessities, and shine into our hearts with the great assurance that Thou art our Portion, and that with Thee we are rich indeed.

O Lord, Thou knowest all of us, our sins and failures, our defects of character, and the weak places where

we lie open to temptation. And we pray for Thy discipline; we pray for Thy direction. Help us in all things to apprehend Thy purpose, and in all things to fulfil Thy purpose, that that will of Thine, even our sanctification which Thou art apparently working out by all the diversity of Thy dealings with us, may be deeper to us, and may be recognised by us, too, as the main thing for which we ought to live. Help us, we pray Thee, that we may be holy as Thou art holy, and bring all our religion to bear constantly so that we may have nothing in our faith which is not unusual in our conduct, and nothing in our conduct which is not regulated and influenced by our faith.

We pray, O Lord, that if any of us here before Thee have any special need, known to us or unknown, Thou wouldst graciously meet it. Guide us day by day by Thy counsel. Help us to be of quick understanding in the fear of the Lord, that we may know what Thou wouldst have us do, and may gladly close with all Thy commandments and with Thy appointments. Thou dost send to some of us heavy duties. Make the back strong for the burden. Thou dost appoint to some of us days of darkness, solitariness, anxiety. Do Thou strengthen Thy servants to look beyond the darkness to the light that abides. And do Thou comfort all sad hearts, and speak Thy grace to all those who are in any way afflicted in mind, body, or estate. And help each of us, in our several ways, to glorify our Lord and Saviour, and to live as in communion with Him, and as setting forth His saving power, and as showing to the world how fair a thing a human character may be, lightened and purified by a present Christ.

We beseech Thee to bless us in our worship, to forgive all the imperfections of our preparation for

this service, and to speak through our lips. And give us grace to hear with our ears, that the word of the Lord may be magnified, whatever becomes of the word of man.

We pray for like blessings to rest upon all congregations of Christian people this morning. And wherever there are loving hearts seeking to draw near to Thee, whether in the companionship of their fellows, or in the solitude, be Thou near to them. And be Thou a little sanctuary to those of Thy people who may be shut out from the great congregation. And bless our Sovereign and our country, and all rulers and guides of opinion and action in this and other lands. And overrule the voices of men's conflicting desires to bring about the great purposes of Thy love. Cast down the Babels that men have built, and build upon their ruins the Holy City, the new Jerusalem.

Hear us, forgive us, grant us Thy blessing beyond our deserts, and beyond even our desires, through Jesus Christ our Lord and Saviour.

XLI

O LORD, Who hast taught us Thy last best name of Love, we thank Thee that when Thou lookest down from the height of Thy sanctuary it is to hear the moaning of the prisoner, and to loose those that are appointed to death. And we would lift up our eyes to Thee Who dwellest on high, and visitest us, with wondering thankfulness that Thou dost remember the Son of Man, and dost lavish upon us the gifts of Thy love.

We come to Thee now, O Lord, with many burdens, with many weights; and our hearts do not glow as they ought at the remembrance of Thy Name, nor do

we aspire after Thee as we ought if we knew what the blessedness is. But we pray that notwithstanding our imperfection, and though our call to Thee be so feeble, Thou wouldst open Thine ear and hear, that Thou wouldst bow Thy heavens and come down. We believe that Thou canst touch our hearts. Surely Thou knowest the way to our spirits, and there is no gulf between us and Thee which Thy love and grace cannot triumphantly bridge over. Therefore we beseech Thee that Thou wouldst enter into our hearts now, and breathe upon us with Thy quickening breath, that we may know Thee, and love Thee, and cleave to Thee, and serve Thee.

We pray for pardon, O Lord, for the cleansing of all our evils from us. Subdue our evil, root out of us any inclinations that are contrary to Thy will and our highest good; and make us, we pray Thee, as Thou dost desire that we should be, pure and holy, and conformed to the image of thy dear Son. We pray that our relation to Thy holy law may be set right. We beseech Thee that Thy fatherly love, and the assurance of it, may fill our hearts and minds. We beseech Thee to loosen our hold upon anything that comes between us and the full surrender of ourselves to Thee, and the continuous discharge of our daily duties. Teach us our secret sins, and set them before us in the light of Thy countenance. And we pray that our knowledge of ourselves may go hand in hand with our knowledge of, and our faith in, Thy quickening and restoring grace; that we may never be driven either from our confidence by the sense of our unworthiness or be led to build presumptuously on our own deserts, in ignorance of Thy righteous judgments. Give us, as we are gathered here in Thy presence this morning,

deeper and stronger desires than we often possess; and help us in receiving from Thy hand some measure of Thy great gifts intended for us in such services, to use the possession as a means of enlarging our desire, and of capacity for Thy gifts. Be with us in our worship, shed abroad Thy love upon our hearts, forgive all our sins, strengthen and help us as we wait before Thee, and accept us now, in the Name of Jesus Christ our Lord and Saviour.

XLII

O LORD our God, Who knowest our hearts, and understandest our needs better than we do, help us, we beseech Thee, to hallow all our desires by submission to Thy holy will. And in regard of all things here below, and the uncertain and perishable good that we need and wish, to breathe our desires to Thee, and to say, 'Nevertheless not my will, but Thine, be done.' We thank Thee for the peace that comes to us when we thus cease from our own works, and delight in what Thou dost appoint and command. We bless thee for all the rest of God which Thou dost give in Thy mercy to them that live by Thee and near Thee. And we pray that we may never be so engrossed with the things that are seen and temporal, and may never so follow after them, as to lose our hold upon Thyself. Help us, day by day, to take what Thou dost give; to do what Thou dost command; to learn both how to be abased and how to be exalted, both how to abound and how to suffer need. May we, in whatsoever state we are, therein and therewith be content. And may our supreme desires ever be turned towards the perfect and eternal good which Thou dost freely give to all them that ask.

Help us, we pray Thee, day by day, in our tasks and difficulties, in our joys and sorrows. May we discern Thy will in all things, and may all things to us be sacred as the symbols of Thine own love of which they are the tokens and the results. Help us, we pray Thee, strenuously to labour to fulfil all our Father's commandments, and to receive all our Father's blessings. Guide us by Thy counsel, defend us by Thy present encompassing grace, put a well-spring of life within our hearts that may ever be rising up into life everlasting. Keep us in all our ways; in so far as Thou knowest it to be for our good accomplish our desires and fulfil our petitions. But above all teach us to count that Thou art our Portion and our Strength, and that having Thee we are rich.

Help us to draw near to Thee, from whatever circumstances we come. May we find in Thy house and in Thy worship all that we need. Thou givest to us the matter of a day in its day. Give us this day what this day requires. May Thy truth enter into our hearts and minds, and fill our lives with peace and light.

Hear us in our prayers for one another, for all Thy servants who, in various lands and ways, are seeking to spread the various manifold blessings of Thy love. Help all thy people to live as becometh the gospel. Bless all those who in this land or elsewhere are in positions to influence opinion and action. Let Thy Kingdom come. May the Name of Jesus Christ be magnified, and the Cross be more and more the throne from which He rules the earth.

Hear us, we beseech Thee, in our prayer; forgive our many sins, and grant us Thy gracious help and presence now, for our Saviour Jesus Christ's sake.

XLIII

WE thank Thee, O Lord, that Thy thoughts are not as our thoughts, but high above them as the heavens are above the earth. And we humbly confess that our ways are not as Thy ways, but have wandered far from the paths which Thou wouldst have us to walk in; and yet we come back to Thee, rejoicing in the assurance that Thou dost abundantly pardon when we forsake our ways and thoughts, and make Thine ours and ours Thine. So we pray Thee that Thou wouldst help us to turn our back upon all that has been evil and contrary to Thy holy will in our characters and lives, and that Thou wouldst help us to lay hold upon Thy great mercy, the abundant pardon, and the unstinted love which Thou dost give to all that seek it. We beseech Thee to pour out upon us to-day the Spirit of grace and of supplication, that we may indeed draw near to Thee, and be raised above our ordinary selves, and brought into closer fellowship with Thee; and taught to think more wisely, and more as Thou wouldst have us to think, of Time and Eternity, of Earth and God, of ourselves and of our Saviour.

We bless Thee, O Lord, for all Thy great mercies to us in days gone by, and for all the thousand benefits which flow in an unbroken stream of light from the Father of lights. Truly every good and perfect gift is from above, and nothing but what is good and perfect comes from Thee. And we bless Thee that we need fear no exhaustion either in Thy will or in Thy resources, for with Thee is no variableness, nor shadow of turning. Help us then to think of Thee always with gladness and peace as the giving God Who giveth unto all men liberally.

We bless Thee that Thou dost not upbraid. We thank Thee that unworthiness does not provoke Thee to withhold. We thank Thee that in all our wanderings Thou dost follow us with benefits, and dost seek to bring us back to Thyself. And we pray Thee to help us that, moved by the mercies of God and most of all by that one great mercy which holds all the rest, the unspeakable gift of Thy dear Son, we may yield ourselves living sacrifices, and be holy and acceptable to Thee. Cleanse our hearts, O Lord ; strengthen in us any feeble good, subdue any ruling evil, take away from us all divergence from Thy will and purpose, all slothfulness in keeping Thy commandments, all the blindness which so often sees but the things that are nearest to us, and sees them wrongly. May we not be of those who cannot see afar off, and have forgotten that they have been purged from their own sins.

Help us, we beseech Thee, in our daily lives to adorn the teaching. Give us grace to subdue ourselves, to aspire after Christ, to follow in the footsteps of the Shepherd. And grant that in our obedient and striving hearts there may ever sound the great voices that call us to come up hither, forsaking that which is beneath, and leaving it behind. May we ever be steadily tending towards Thyself, and receiving into our open hearts more and more of the life and the fullness of God. Accept, O Lord, we pray Thee, our thanksgivings and petitions. We acknowledge before Thee our many evils and sins. We cast ourselves on that great mercy, sealed and conveyed to us in the gift of Thy dear Son. And we beseech Thee that Thou wilt accept us now ; bless us in our worship here before Thee, and ever be to us our Light and our Salvation, the strength of our hearts and our portion for ever.

Hear us in Christ our Lord, we beseech Thee.

XLIV

HELP us, O Lord, that we too, in the solitude of our own souls, may find refuge in Thee from an intrusive world. And do Thou give us grace to keep near Thee when duty calls us again into the low levels of life. 'Help us ever to bear about with us as a sweet memory and a silent impulse, the thought of Thy love, of Thy presence, of Thy judgment, of Thy help.' And may we daily live as making real to ourselves the truths which we profess to believe.

Forgive, O Lord, all our blindness to Thy highest gifts, and our preference of the lower benefits of Thy providence to the higher blessings of Thy grace. May we look for something better from the Prophet that should come into the world than the bread that perishes. May we labour most for that meat which endures unto eternal life, which the Son of Man will give us. And help us, we pray Thee, to take and nourish our souls upon the things that are freely given to us of God, given before we ask, continuing to be given, or offered, though we often refuse. Draw near to each of us, we beseech Thee, gathered here in Thy presence this morning, and help us in this hour of worship. Speak Thou, O Lord, through the lips that speak, and open the ears that hear the outward words, that they may receive Thy message. And may we all feel that God Himself is speaking to us, and all be touched by that mighty word. We know that it cannot return unto Thee void; and we would humbly believe that even when weakened and mingled with men's words, it may still retain something of its pristine power, and may still be mighty, through God, to the purpose for which Thou dost send.

We pray Thee to be with us in our worship, to deliver us from all unworthy motives and thoughts, to bring our hearts into real contact with Thyself and Thy truth, to bow our wills that they may be submissive, and to open all our understanding and our nature that into every corner of our being there may flow the great tide of Thy revealed will and word, cleansing and blessing and life-giving whithersoever the river cometh.

We beseech Thee to look upon us in our daily circumstances and duties, especially to be with any of us that have heavy burdens of responsibility or care or sorrow to carry. We pray that strength may be given to us according to our day, and the peaceful assurance that Thou sendest no man a warfare at his own charges, but that when Thou commandest Thou dost empower and fit Thy people for all which Thou dost expect of them. Be near each of us, then, day by day, and strengthen us that no false glitter may draw away our eyes from Thee, nor any conflicting loves shut our hearts to Thy love. And may our wills ever be conformed to Thine, and our conduct ever be in accordance with what we know to be Thy will concerning us. We commend ourselves, and all whom we love, to Thy gracious care; help us now as we wait before Thee, through Jesus Christ our Saviour-Lord.

XLV

O LORD, most merciful and near, we would come to carve and take away our portion in Thy mercy, and to feel in our hearts that we are indeed near to Thee. Blessed be Thy name for all Thy loving-kindness and tender care. We thank Thee that Thou hast

brought us together again to worship Thee ; and beseech Thee that now, and in such time to come as may yet remain for us in this fellowship of praise, we may have Thy presence with us whensoever we gather together, and that Thou wouldst pour out of Thy Spirit upon the congregations gathering here from time to time. And help us who have to approach Thy word that with faithfulness and simplicity, and in the power of the Holy Spirit, we may ever stand up before this people.

O Lord, some of us can look back upon many years of mercy and blessing vouchsafed to us in our gatherings here. We remember those that have joined in prayer with us, and have passed hence to the worship of the heavens. We remember the days and the years that are gone. And we beseech Thee to be with us still ; and, if it please Thee, yet more specially and abundantly than Thou hast been in the past. And help us all to love as becometh the gospel, adorning the teaching of Christ the Master in all things. May the word of the Lord sound out as with a trumpet-note from us and our lives. And may Thy blessing be granted to us in all our happy fellowship. We draw near to Thee to pray that Thou wouldst strengthen and quicken us for all Thy service, that Thou wouldst manifest Thyself to us more graciously and abundantly in our hearts and thoughts, that Thou wouldst deliver us from our own weaknesses, and arm us against the temptations of our characters, circumstances, and callings.

We beseech Thee that Thou wouldst be with each of us in the walks of daily life, and wouldst lead us there in paths of righteousness and peace. We adore Thee for all Thy great mercies revealed to us, and gathered for the race of men in the one Lord Jesus Christ. And we beseech Thee that that Name which is above every

name may ever sound as music in our ears and hearts, and that we may live in the closest communion with Him, and in daily imitation of His example, and faith in His sacrifice.

O Lord, give us Thy blessing in our worship; teach each of our hearts; help us, whatever be our condition and present necessities, to have recourse to the one all-sufficient fountain of all supply; and from Thee, in the fullness of Thy love and spirit bestowed upon us through Jesus Christ, may we draw grace for grace, and that yet more abundantly day by day.

We commend ourselves to Thy gracious care; we beseech Thee to accept our thankfulness. (We pray Thee to look upon our weakness, to pardon our sins, to teach us our faults, to deliver us from the dominion of evil, and to bring us more and more into the possession of Thy kingdom, which is righteousness and peace and joy in the Holy Ghost. Hear us, for Jesus Christ our Saviour's sake.

XLVI

O LORD, our God, how many are our needs, how great are Thy treasures, how little of these we take, how poorly we use what we do possess. But we come to Thee, for it is Thou that must give the desire after Thee, and it is Thou that art the giving God Who upbraidest not. And from Thy fullness do we all receive, according to our hunger and our sense of need. O grant, we beseech Thee, that we may covet most earnestly the best gifts, and may not waste our energies, nor fix, as we have done, our desires on fleeting and uncertain riches and gifts, but on the living God, Who giveth all things to enjoy.

Guide our thoughts in this hour of worship, help us to fix them on Thyself, and on the things that belong to our peace. Teach us, O Lord, we pray, wise and true words to speak, words that are strong with Thy strength, and filled with the power of Thy gospel. (Keep us from pouring the water of our own thoughts into the wine of the Kingdom, and help us that the lips that speak may be touched with the live coal from the altar of sacrifice. And, O Lord, open all hearts and minds, and grant that our service this morning may be of use to us all, and redound to the glory of Thy great name.

We beseech Thee to bless each of us according to our several necessities. Thou knowest those amongst us who may have come into Thy house burdened. We pray that Thou wouldst bear their burdens with Them, and Thyself fulfil the law which Thou hast given to us. And help us all in our time of need, to lay a firm hold of faith upon Thyself, and whatever may be our wants, may we draw from Thee a sufficiency for them. Strengthen us where we are weak, what is low do Thou raise and support, illumine what is dark, and guide us all more and more in the way of peace.

We beseech Thee to bless us gathered in Thy presence, to accept our thanks for all Thy great mercy, and now to manifest Thyself to us, through Jesus Christ our Saviour-Lord.

XLVII

HELP us, O Lord, the Fountain of gladness, to rejoice in the Lord always, and may our deepest blessedness be sought where it can be found, in Thyself. Look upon

us here gathered; give us Thy peaceful presence and Thy strong help that our hearts may all be drawn into fellowship with Thee, and however various our characters and needs, may we receive from Thee the blessings which we most require. Help us to praise Thee, to loosen the ties which bind us to the world and the things seen and temporal. And may God, and His Christ, and His Gospel, and His Heaven be very real and very near to us all.

We ask it for our Saviour's sake.

XLVIII

O LORD, Who dwellest in the light inaccessible, we thank Thee that we can draw near and walk in the light by Him Who is the Way and the Truth and the Light. And we would come to Thee now, though our eyes be feeble and Thy light full of glory. Yet we draw near as Thy children, and would come close to Thy heart and bless Thee, that though Thou art far beyond all thought and blessing, hearts can touch. And Thou dost let us love Thee, and nestle close to Thee. We pray, then, O Lord, that Thou wouldst do more than permit us to come to Thee. We ask Thee to draw us to Thyself, for surely Thou dost know the way to the hearts and minds that Thou hast made, and the touch of Thy finger can be laid upon us. Bring us near to Thyself, and help us that, day by day, amidst all our changing circumstances, perplexities, and duties, we may still be able to keep up our communion with Thee, and to walk in Thy presence rejoicing to think that Thou, God, seest us.

We come to Thee, Lord, conscious of our sins, but

not made afraid to draw near to Thee by reason of them, for we thank Thee that we have

An offering and a sacrifice.

And we beseech Thee that all of us united in a common sinfulness may be more blessedly knit together in a common faith; and may each find that the blood of Jesus Christ Thy Son cleanses from all sin.

We pray for Thy pardon, for more than Thy pardon, for Thy righteousness to be put into our minds; and that our characters may be moulded after the likeness of Thy dear Son, Who is the perfect embodiment of Thy perfect will.

Go with each of us, we beseech Thee, into all our spheres of duty, and keep us from going anywhere where we cannot carry Thee. Teach us the meaning of circumstances, the message of providence, the duties that spring from Thy appointments of lot and task. And help us to do all things heartily, and that we may do them heartily may we do them as to the Lord. Guide us by Thy counsel, strengthen us by Thy grace. If any of us are in any kind of trouble or perplexity be near such, and give counsel in the lot of each, and in due time the dawn of gladness and peace. Help all Thy people who are afflicted in mind, body, or estate, to bring all their sorrows unto Thee, and to realise that blessed and wondrous truth that 'in all their afflictions He was afflicted,' and the Angel of His Presence saved them. We pray that it may be so with us, and with all who may be known to us, and with the many unknown on whom Thy hand lies heavy may Thy right hand hold them up.

And now, O Lord, we beseech Thee to be with us in our hour of worship, to guide our thoughts when we try to speak some words in accordance with Thy holy

will. May Thy blessed Spirit teach us how to speak and how to hear. And whatever else may be accomplished, or fail to be achieved, by this our service, may many hearts be brought into living and loving contact with the one great living and loving heart, the heart of the Christ. And may the message of Thy grace not be marred by its passage through the human medium; but be, and manifest itself in many a mind and life, to be what it is, the word of God which endureth for ever.

O Lord, hear us in our prayer; grant us Thy help in our service, be near each of us, and forgive our sins and answer our petitions, through Jesus Christ our Lord and Saviour.

XLIX

O LORD, near us when we think not of Thee, near us to pity even when we transgress against Thee, near us to restore and forgive when we turn again to Thee, we would draw near to Thee and hide ourselves from all our weaknesses, from all our guilt, beneath the shadow of Thy wing. (We thank Thee that we need not to flee from Thee but rather to flee to Thee when we are most conscious of the gulf between us and Thee, and when we have separated ourselves from our God by our sin.) And we beseech Thee that Thou wouldst bring us into that sweet and strong fellowship with Thyself in which we may be careless of outward evils, and laugh at calamity. We pray Thee to strengthen us for all holy living in time to come, and to grant that more and more we may live priestly lives of consecration, and self-surrender, and brotherly mediation, and may walk amongst men representatives of God.

We bring to Thee the whole burden of our manifold evils, and pray Thee to deal with them, for they are too great for us; 'iniquities prevail against us.' Blessed be Thy Name! we can go on to say, 'As for our iniquities, Thou wilt purge them away.' May it be so! We ask not only for pardon, which we know we have, but we ask for Thy Divine influence, for the life of Christ Himself to dwell in our hearts and lives, and there to work the blessed transformation and cleansing and triumph over our own weaknesses, and all temptations which our waywardness finds in even Thy blessings and our duties. Lord! we come to Thee rejoicing in Thy great Name, and in the assurance that Thou art faithful to that Name, and that all which Thou hast been in past days Thou art this day, and will be to us, if we choose, for ever. Fulfil then, we beseech Thee, the promises whereon Thou hast caused us to hope by Thy past dealings; and be to us Deliverer, and Strength, and Emancipator, and Guide, and Portion, that we too may be able to say that the Lord is our God and we His people.

(O Lord! receive our thanks for Thy manifold mercies to us, and for all the gifts of Thy gracious love filtered to us moment by moment through the dealings of Thy providence. And pour upon us in a flood in the one great gift which carries all else in it, the unspeakable gift of Thy dear Son. Help us in this hour of worship that we may be delivered from all our weakness and evil, that we may be able to gather in all our thoughts and desires, and fix them upon Thyself and the things unseen. We bless Thee for the triumphant memories that cluster round this day of the Lord. We thank Thee for a Saviour Who died; yea! rather that is risen again, Who is even at the right hand of God, Who also maketh intercession for us. And we beseech Thee that

we may each feel that in Him we, too, triumph over death, and have already died to sin, and risen to a new, a better, and undying life to God.

We pray Thee to manifest Thy presence as we worship here before Thee, and to accept us through Jesus Christ our Saviour.

L

O LORD! help us to be holy as the Father in Heaven is holy; and to that end may we all, by humble faith and loyal love and true communion with Thee, submit ourselves to the cleansing which Thou hast stored for the whole world in the Lamb of God. We pray Thee to keep us near Thyself, in submission, in obedience. May our thoughts not be absorbed by other things, to the exclusion of the greatest thing. May we all get the wisdom which shall bring all our works to Thee, and offering up the trivialities of daily life on the great altar may we have the Giver and the gift, the offering and the offerer hallowed and magnified.

O Lord, our different characters, and circumstances, and past history, and present duties and prospects, are all so diverse that it is hard for one voice to express all our needs. But Thou knowest them, and we pray that we, too, may know them more wisely than we sometimes are apt to apprehend them. We bless Thee that we do know that Thou art all-sufficient. May the knowledge have more influence on our daily lives, and shape these more thoroughly than it has done in the past. And help us that we may find a help to everything that is good, and that whatsoever in us is weak and wrong may be subdued, and whatever is feebly right may be strengthened and confirmed and deepened.

And grant that our religion may not only be a thing of Sundays, and chapels, and of spoken prayers, but a power that rules all our lives, and is manifest to men as the motive of all our conduct.

Bless each of us in all our duties. Be present in all sick-chambers, and give patience in bitter weakness and pain and weariness, and the ebbing away of strength. We pray that Thou wouldst give wisdom and tender hands and tender hearts to all that watch by sick-beds; and that Thou wouldst grant that whatsoever afflictions any of us, or of those dear to us, may now be exercised by, there may be sent more than sufficient weight of consolation and of power. Grant that though the outward man perishes the inward man may be renewed day by day.

O Lord, guide our thoughts, and help us to speak and to hear Thy truth, and to receive it. Guide our actions when we go hence, and help us to live Thy truth, and be near each of us day by day.

We commend to Thee ourselves, and all whom we love; all good people who are trying to do Thy will. We pray that Thou wouldst speedily put an end to war, and that Thou wouldst subdue and hold in check evil passions that may hinder the coming of peace. And we beseech Thee that Thou wouldst diffuse throughout the world the gracious principles and the mighty powers of that Kingdom which is righteousness and peace and joy; and that Jesus Christ may, not in name only but in reality, be the Lord of the nations of the earth. May His professing followers learn to hate war, to hang the trumpet in the hall, and learn war no more. Hear us; speak through us and to us, and grant us Thy blessing, and give us the hearing ear, for our Saviour Christ's sake.

LI

GLADLY and thankfully, O Lord, would we come to Thee. We bless Thee that we can lift our thoughts to the place where Thou art, and though we cannot comprehend we can draw near and rejoice that all which we can know of Thee is so blessed as to make us sure that what we do not know is blessed even more. We thank Thee for the darkness which is light inaccessible. We thank Thee for the light in which we can walk. We thank Thee for the light which has come near to us in Jesus Christ, the brightness of Thy glory. We thank Thee for the light which comes into heart and conscience there, and we pray that in Thy light we may see light. Too often we have thought it darkness; too often we have been blind, as they that grope sightless in the noontide. Too often we have shut our eyes against Thee. Clothe our spirits with the sweet radiance of Thy loving presence, and help us more and more to rejoice in the dayspring from on high which hath visited us.

We come to Thee, O Lord, to bless Thee for all Thy great mercies to us; to spread before Thee our many wants. Often we construe them wrongly, and think we need things that we do not need, and are insensible to the true supply of our true needs. We beseech Thee to teach us, O Lord, what we really want, and to help us to seek first the Kingdom of God and His righteousness, and 'all things that are lovely and of good report'; and the sweetness of communion with Thee, and the power of yielding ourselves submissively to Thy governance and control. And we ask that Thou wouldst deliver us from foolish choosing after folly, from the seeking after vanity which makes us vain,

and wouldst help us more and more to discern where our true riches are, even in Thyself.

O Lord, we bring to Thee our weakness, and pray for Thy strength. Day by day we have to encounter things that are too much for us. It is not only our iniquities that prevail against us, but our duties often press very heavily upon us, and make us feel that we are insufficient for these things; and the varying dealings of Thy providence with us, with the swift alternations of shadow, sunshine, good and evil, call for more than we can live rightly to grasp and confess them, rightly to use and to profit by them. So we ask that in all the maze of daily life Thy hand may lead us, smoothing out the rough places, and making the crooked places straight for the feet that would walk in Thy commandments. And we pray that whatever we may have to encounter we may have God with us, and so be more than conquerors through Him that loved us. Be Thy mercy upon us now, as our hope is in Thee, and not only according as, but exceeding abundantly above, all that we can ask or think.

Thou dost sometimes surprise and shame Thy petitioners with the abundance of Thy dealings. May it be so with us this morning, and if it please Thee come into our assembly; and although our petitions and praises are but poor, as compared with what they ought to be, let Thy gracious Spirit be granted to each of us, and may we feel that it is no vain thing to wait upon the Lord. We commit ourselves to Thy gracious care, and beseech Thee to remember all whom we remember, and to speak Thy grace to waiting souls, and Thy loving rebukes to forgetful ones; to draw us all out of the mire in which we are too apt to walk, and to set our feet upon the rock, and establish our goings.

Hear, and in Thy great mercy accept and answer us, for our Saviour Christ's sake.

LII

O LORD, may it be true of us, when we pray, that it is not we that speak, but Thy Spirit in us. May our desires be inbreathed by Thyself, that our prayers may be sweet and acceptable since Thou hast given the Spirit by which we pray.

O Lord, we would not prescribe to Thee, we would not bring to Thee our hot and foolish longings and wishes to Thy Throne. We ask that deepest of all in us may be the Master's prayer, 'Nevertheless not my will, but Thine.' So help us, we pray Thee, to live in peace because we live in submission and in trust. And may we find that all things are good to us because we are ready to accept what God appoints, and to be fellow-workers with Him in getting the most out of it, for our profit and growth in godlikeness. We pray Thee to lead each of us in paths of righteousness, to strengthen our feeble desires and resolves that we may run with patient perseverance the race which Thou dost appoint, and carry the solemn sanctions of Thy gracious will which makes duty of everything that we do.

Forgive, O Lord, all the imperfection, the blots and stains, the interruptions and the rebellions in our daily lives; and help us more and more to bring our whole being into union with Thyself, that thoughts, wishes, affections, purposes, efforts, aims, may all be taught, inspired, and directed by Thee.

And now, O Lord, we pray for Thy blessing to rest upon us in our various occupations; be near us accord-

ing to our special present circumstances. Reveal Thyself to the sorrowful as Thou indeed art, the only sufficient Comforter Who knows how to handle wounds without hurting them, and to so bind them up that the bandage shall not pain. Be near any of us that are in trial or difficulty, and we beseech Thee to be in sick-chambers with those that are in pain, and with those that watch them in anxiety and sorrow. We pray that Thou wouldst guide us all, according to Thy diverse will concerning us, which yet, in all its diversity, is one at bottom.

Bless all Christian people, all Christian workers at home and abroad. Send out Thy light and Thy truth, and let them guide the stumbling nations, and those that sit in darkness, into wholesome activity, and walking in the way of God. Break Thou the bow, O Lord, and cut the spear in sunder, and turn the swords into ploughshares, and the spears into pruning-hooks. We beseech Thee that Thou wouldst subdue passions and hatreds, and all the selfish purposes which lead men to wage war against each other, and that Thou wouldst establish the Kingdom of peace throughout all the earth. Be near us now; grant us Thy blessing in our worship; guide us and teach us, and help us to receive Thy teaching and guidance, for the sake of Jesus Christ our Lord and Saviour.

LIII

O LORD, Thou art our Light and our Salvation. Help us, we beseech Thee, to make Thee the strength of our lives and our portion for ever. We come to Thee now, needing Thee all the more the less we feel our need, and we bless Thee that Thou dost not wait to be

asked but dost pour out Thy love and Thy grace upon unfaithful and disobedient and forgetful children. Lift our hearts to Thyself, we beseech Thee, and breathe Thou, by that Spirit of supplication Who maketh intercession for the saints, desires into our hearts according to Thine own heart. May we long most for the best things; may our wishes not be led astray by our earthly senses and inclinations; may we see clearly what is the chief good for man in all the days of his else vain life. And may we cherish the conviction that Thou art our portion, our joy, and our all. Help us to order our lives accordingly, and not only when we stand before Thee in prayer, but in all the hurry and struggle of our daily work; when so many duties, and so many intrusive things, press upon us to press Thee out, may we keep our hearts and minds fixed upon Thee.

We thank Thee for times like these, when all around us and without us helps us to come nearer Thee, and for once sense and habit become the allies of the soul. And we pray that, surrounded as we are by the tokens of worship, and with this day filled as it is with associations and memories which bring the risen Saviour to our minds and hearts, we may find it somewhat easier than we often do, in the strife and solitude of daily tasks, to draw near to God, and make sure that He is beside us.

We pray for Thy blessing in this hour. We come to Thee with cares and sorrows and burdens of duty and of endurance. Some of us with foiled desires, some with broken and disappointed hopes, some with perplexities and troubles, some of us with aching and sad hearts, all of us needing Thee, O Lord. We beseech Thee that it may not be in vain that we gather our-

selves together. Thou dost say to us by Thy providences, as well as by outward associations to-day, and the recurrence of this hour of worship, 'Seek ye My face!' Oh that our hearts may answer, 'Thy face, Lord, will I seek'; and then we can venture to offer the prayer, 'Hide not Thy face far from us.' 'Thou hast never said to any of the seed of Jacob, Seek ye My face in vain.'

We bless Thee that when we seek Thou art found of us, and Thou hast found us before we sought. O Lord, we beseech Thee, then, to cleanse our hearts; to fix them on Thyself; to make our lives fuller of God, consciously to ourselves; and to give us grace, day by day, to fight the good fight which faith involves, and in which faith is triumphant. Keep us, Lord, from our own weaknesses, and from all the subtle temptations which lie in our hearts, and are so ready to be awakened into malignant activity, even by duties and blessings. Strengthen us to follow the Lord, whithersoever He goeth; and give us wisdom, we pray, that we may apprehend all our duties, and grace and strength to will and to do them.

We pray for Thy pardoning mercy, we need the touch of Thy forgiving hand, we need the live coal from the altar of sacrifice to be laid upon lips and hearts that our iniquity may be taken away and our sin purged. And we pray that Thou wouldst give us all which Thou seest we require for life and godliness, and keep us from, and help us to be victors over, whatever holds of death and sin. We pray Thee to hear these our supplications, to grant the forgiveness of our many sins, and accept us in Christ our Saviour.

LIV

HELP us, Lord, we beseech Thee, that our faith and hope may follow that great Forerunner, and pass within the vail, and there be surely and steadfastly fixed. Strengthen us day by day, by the light and grace of that great hope, to live here as those ought to do who look for the City which hath the foundations, and are strangers and pilgrims here on earth. Take away from us all the doubts and darkness that may lie upon that future, and may we show the same diligence unto the full assurance of hope unto the end, and be heirs and followers of them who through faith and patience inherit the promises.

Regard us, O Lord, gathered here before Thee now, and needing so much that we know not where to begin with the catalogue of our wants; but having so much in Thee that we are sure that Thou art able to supply all our need, according to Thy riches in glory which Thou hast treasured, that we may find them in Christ Jesus. Help us, whatever burdens of care or sorrow or work we may bring with us into Thy presence, to cast all our burden upon the Lord, and may we find not only in the moment's peace and ease, but in the strength that is breathed into us in daily life, that it is no vain thing to invoke Thy help, or to bring Thee into the field to fight for us.

And now help us to speak some words in Thy Name which may have in them the power of Thy Holy Spirit. And do Thou deliver us from all that may mar the fullness of our yielding of heart and mind to Thy truth and its influences now. May speaker and hearers alike be helped, each in our several ways; and may we all feel that God has been speaking to us of a truth, and that

our ears have been opened to hear the blessed words which make for life and blessedness.

O Lord! accompany with Thy Spirit's help and grace all the work done to-day, in any form, in any communion, and in every land which has the glory of God, and the good of men, for its aim. And do Thou graciously give to all Thy servants who minister of Thy truth the firm faith in it for themselves that they may believe, and therefore speak, and their words have the power which no unbelieving words can ever have on men's hearts. O Lord! guide us all in our different ways, and be near each of us, according to our varying interests. Comfort any that are in sorrow, be with those who may be bereaved and darkened. Let desolate hearts find a sufficiency in God, Who empties no places which He does not wish to fill.

We pray Thee to comfort all that mourn, to appoint for them that mourn in Zion 'beauty for ashes, and the garment of praise for the spirit of heaviness.'

And now we would commit ourselves to Thy gracious care. We thank Thee for all Thy past mercies to us; we beseech Thee that Thou wouldst be near us still, that Thou wouldst help and bless us, and that Thou wouldst make us day by day to walk in the footsteps of the Lamb of God, and cherish the bright hope of being with Him for evermore.

Hear us, we beseech Thee; in Thy mercy answer and accept, through Jesus Christ our Lord and Saviour.

LV

O LORD, to Whom belongeth mercy, we would bring Thee our adoration and praise thus unceasing; and love, poor as it is, for Thine unspeakable gift. Thou

art the fountain and the home of love ; may we know and believe, and by believing know, the love that God hath to us ; and may we dwell in Thee as our peaceful home and our sure habitation, where no evil can befall us nor any plague come nigh our dwelling. And we thank Thee, Lord, that Thou hast scattered all the clouds born of our own evil, and rising like mists from our own hearts, which have often hid Thy face, and made us dread Thee instead of cleaving to Thee, and sometimes made us forget Thee to get rest instead of rejoicing to remember Thee.

O Lord ! we thank Thee that Thou hast lifted away doubts, and darkness, and dread, from all those who see in Jesus Christ the visible Love of God. And we beseech Thee that we all may be so blessed. Our eyes have been blinded. We know our treacherous hearts have often gone astray, our feeble wills have resolved, and our strong inclinations have broken the resolutions. But we bring to Thee all our unworthiness, all our wandering ; and we beseech Thee that in Thy great mercy Thou wouldst fix our affections, subdue and fill our wills and all our powers, and help us to make all our love full of God, and so full of peace and nobleness. We crave Thy pardoning mercy, Thy sustaining grace ; we beseech Thee that Thou wouldst impel and restrain us, urging us with sweet power to ‘all things that are lovely and of good report,’ and keep us back with a strong hand from all their opposites.

We beseech Thee that Thou wouldst help each of us, day by day, as we go about our ordinary avocations ; that we may find God in our work because we bring Him there ; and that all our tasks, and perchance our difficulties and disappointments, may be as means by which we come more close to Thyself, with a wiser

knowledge of our own necessities, and a fuller faith in Thy sufficiency.

We pray Thee to help us to make our religion a daily reality. May it penetrate all our actions in forming and purifying. What we do may we do it from the heart, because we do it as to the Lord and not to men. And whatever may be the difference of circumstances in each of us before Thee now, may we all have the one all-sufficient good, Thine own gracious presence, strengthening and lifting us up. If there are any of us with special burdens to carry, either of sorrow or of sin or of duty, help us to cast them on Thee; and Thou wilt help us to bear them. If there are any of us struggling with anxieties or perplexities, or with hearts aching from loss, or with foreboding of the things that may be coming, or with our feet in slippery places and appealed to by strong temptation, we pray for grace to resist, to stand fast, to keep our integrity, and to follow Jesus Christ.

We pray for Thy blessing, O Lord, to rest upon Thy services this evening. Thou knowest our need, Lord! so give us, we pray, some words to speak that shall be Thy words, and let them have the power of Thy truth, and of Thy Son and His Spirit in Thee, that whatever human weaknesses must necessarily cleave to our utterances, there may still shine through the earthen vessel glances of the gold and the light of life.

O Lord! help us to hear as well as to speak. May it not be a vain thing for us thus to gather together. Oh that Thy word might find its way through hearing ears and waiting hearts, and that it may not be for any of us that we have come together for the worse, and not for the better.

We commit ourselves to Thy gracious care now, and

trustfulness born of thankfulness, and experience for all the future, and beseech Thee that Thou wouldst be our Portion for ever, as Thou hast promised to be. In Thy great mercy forgive and answer us. Bless all whom we love, listen to the many petitions that have gone up from Thy people this day, and shower down large answers and blessing, through Jesus Christ our Lord and Saviour.

LVI

O LORD! Who dost bless us at all times, may we bless Thee at all times. And since Thy benefits are continually in our lives, may Thy praise be as continually in our mouths. We too have to say, 'This poor man cried, and the Lord helped him.' Oh that we had cried oftener, and more earnestly; our lives would have been more illuminated and calmed by Thy manifest answers.

O Lord! we confess with wonder at our own folly that we have so little used the right of access to the Throne, and so often employed it for unworthy purposes. Our prayers have too often been our passionate desires to bend Thy will to ours, and to force our notions of good upon Thee. We pray that Thou wouldst teach us more of the nobleness and loftiness of what a true prayer is, and that we may desire more earnestly than anything beside that our wills may be conformed to Thine, and that we may hold all our wishes, and desires, and fancies of what is best for us in subordination and submission to Thy better will, to Thy clearer knowledge, to Thy more tender and wise and mighty love. And so help us that we

May travel on life's common way
In cheerful godliness,

in patient acceptance of Thy providences, and in earnest desires to draw from them all the good which Thou hast stored in them for us.

We would come to bless Thee for Thy dealings with us, and to pray that we may increasingly learn the wisdom and the blessedness in everything of giving thanks, and so rejoicing evermore. We do believe that none of them that trust in Thee shall be desolate. Therefore, we beseech Thee that as our guard against all transient evil, lowliness, and sorrow, we may be able to feel always the bond that knits us to Thee, and to live in quiet and constant trust. Help us to learn the fear of the Lord that waits on trust, to hate evil and to do good, to walk in the ways of Thy commandments, and to be of those righteous whom no harm can touch. Strengthen us to take upon our shoulders the yoke which is easy, and to bear upon our backs the burden which is light, that our days may indeed fly happily in that dear service.

Teach us, we pray Thee, to draw very near to Thee, and by fixed wills and conscious remembrance of Thee to pass our days in communion with Thyself, that so we may be guided by Thine eye, and discern the lightest monitions of Thy will. We thank Thee that they who wait to know God's will are never long left in ignorance of it. We beseech Thee that Thou wouldst keep us from misreading any of Thy purposes concerning us, and help us, day by day, to be willing to do the will that we may know of its teaching. So, O Lord! do Thou guide us through all perplexity. May the light that is in us ever be attended by us. May it be our guiding star, so that we shall not walk in darkness. May Christ Himself be our Light, and we His followers, who know the path.

And now, O Lord ! shed abroad Thy grace and love upon all our hearts. We pray Thee to take away anything that may hinder our fellowship with Thee. May we learn to-day something more of what our Lord and Father is to us, and means for us, and would have us to be. And may old truths have new freshness and power as applied to the new circumstances of our lives. We have to say every day, however uneventful and unchanging the duties of our familiar lives may be, that we have not passed this way heretofore. Ever guide, and strengthen us to accept Thy guidance. Be near any that have any special need of Thy presence and help. Strengthen us all to draw near to Thee now, and let the light of Thy countenance shine into our hearts and lives, and the joy of the Lord be our strength. Hear us, Lord ! forgive all our need, and win us, we pray Thee, from our wayward ways, and many faults, and help us to hear and worship for our Saviour Christ's sake.

LVII

O LORD, our gracious God, we thank Thee for, and would respond with all our hearts to, that great love wherewith Thou hast loved us, even when we were dead in trespasses and in sins. Thou hast come nigh to us, who were afar off, in that the Word was made flesh and dwelt among us. And we beseech Thee that, humbly and gladly, we may come near to Thee through Whom, by Whom, we have access unto the holiest of all ; and can lay our faces, full of confusion, because of our unworthiness, on the very heart of our Father God. Help us daily to live close by Thyself, and in our spirits may that mighty power dwell which shall build us up for a habitation of God that dwells in us.

O Lord! lead us into the blessed depths of communion with Thyself. May we know what it is to dwell in love, and so to dwell as in our home, and habitually in God. We beseech Thee that this may be so, even whilst our hands are busy with the tasks of life. Thou dost not mean that these should part us from Thee. Our weakness too often permits them to do so. We ask Thee that a better mind may be in us, and that we may understand more how all these common things are provided in order that in them we may have access to Thee; and by reason of our very necessities realise to ourselves, in our conflicts and toils, that we are drawn and driven closer to Thyself. Thus help us to turn all our work into worship, and at every step along the road have the presence of our Guide and our God.

And now to Thee, Who knowest our necessities better than we ourselves do, we pray that Thou wouldst teach us to see Thy loving will in everything that befalls us. We do not venture to tell Thee what is best for us, but may we be exempt from care, from carking anxieties, from all unsubmissive kicking against the pricks, from all bootless murmuring at what cannot come back, from all dark and enfeebling dread of what may or must come in the future; to live at liberty because we keep Thy precepts. Give us, we beseech Thee, Thy presence and help as we remain in our hour of worship. We thank Thee that we have often found Thee here. We thank Thee for all the blessings that have been ministered to us in past years. Still be with us and help us in hearing and speaking Thy word, in all the acts and exercise of Christian fellowship and worship. And grant that each of us, as we go forth into the various duties of life, may carry with us the savour of the Name

of Jesus Christ; and whether by word or by life, by both as occasion may serve us, by either as Thy providence does appoint, may be Thy witnesses in the world.

And we beseech Thee to remember all sad hearts, to send Thy grace and Thy peace to all such, to speak words of strong consolation which are more than words or realities to all that are afflicted. And help us, O Lord, in all our various trials, greater or smaller, not to put away from ourselves Thy solace, any more than in our various works we neglect Thy commandments. And now we beseech Thee to bestow some quickening impulse from Thy good Spirit, and some truths to meditate upon which may help and strengthen, guide and correct, and all we ask through Jesus Christ our Saviour-Lord.

LVIII

THANKFULLY, O Lord, would we come to Thee now, rejoicing that we can think of Thee as our unfailing Friend; and praying that Thou wouldst help us to cleave close to Thee, by faith and love, by obedience and desire. Thou art good and upright, therefore Thou wilt teach sinners in the way. Thou art the God of our salvation, and on Thee would we wait all the day; and pray that in our hearts there may ever abide that meekness, the possessors of which Thou wilt guide in judgment and teach Thy ways. We thank Thee that we do know that all the paths of the Lord are mercy and truth; and we beseech Thee that if ever our feeble sight fails to discern the majesty and the mercifulness of Thy goings, and if ever Thy path seems to us to be in the deep waters, unfathomable and untraceable, Thou wouldst help us to apprehend that

every cloud that veileth love itself is love; and that the paths which to us seem to be in the deep are really in the sanctuary. Help us thus to live lords of the world and of ourselves, and in all the duties that devolve upon us.

And strengthen us, we pray Thee, that our vision may not be wholly occupied, nor our hearts entirely absorbed, in the things that are seen and temporal. May they be transparent to our faith, so that through them, and even by means of them, we may be able to bring more closely to our minds and hearts the things and the persons that are eternal. May we live as seeing the Invisible, and may we walk in the light of His face, rejoicing for all that we can see of the brightness, and rejoicing that there is so much of it which is too bright for our eyes.

We thank Thee, O Lord, for what we know of Thee. We would thank Thee not less for what we never can know. We are sure from what Thou hast revealed to us of Thyself that all the rest must be of the same texture, and that nothing that is hid in God can contradict what is manifested of God. And so we fall back upon the plain truth that Thou preservest man and beast, and bow with submission before the judgments which are a mighty deep, believing that deeper than they is the righteousness which is as the great mountains, and spreads its roots beneath the judgments of the Lord.

We beseech Thee, then, to help us thus to live, thus to labour, thus to endure as knowing that Thou art the faithful Creator, the faithful redeeming God. We beseech Thee for Thy blessing to rest upon us gathered here before Thee this morning, that we may enter into the calm sweetness, the stable blessedness, of those

who dwell beneath the shadow of Thy wing, and in Thy secret place are kept as in a sure habitation, far from danger and far from fear.

We thank Thee for all Thy great mercies, for the blessings of every day that come punctual, precious, and sufficient. We thank Thee for the greater mercy that lies behind all these, and is but partially manifested by them. Thou hast before the sons of men wrought for us great goodness. We bless Thee that in Thy deep storehouses Thou hast still greater goodness laid up for them that fear Him. And so we would take all the transient blessings, and the things that perish with the using, and use them in that they are perishing for the imperishable good of bringing us to Thyself. And we trust Thee for the things in the future, and beyond the grave, as well as for the future of the next moment, sure that Thou doest all things according to the purpose of Thy own will, which is the purpose of Thy own heart's love.

Hear us now, O Lord ; cleanse our hearts and minds from all evil ; break any bonds that may still be knitting us to low things, even whilst we come together thus ; and help us now, with true hearts and full assurance of faith, to draw near to Thee, and to rejoice in the light of Thy face. Hear us, we beseech Thee, for our Lord Christ's sake.

LIX

O LORD, our gracious Father, we thank Thee that already, ere we ask, Thou hast blessed us with all spiritual blessings in heavenly places in Christ ; and since Thou hast not tarried nor withheld Thy goodness until we have felt our need of it, and brought petitions

for it, we come to Thee to ask especially that we may be strengthened to take the things that are freely given to us of God, and to make our own all that fullness of power, purity, peace, and blessedness which Thou hast stored as in an accessible place for all the world in Jesus Christ. Help us that we may not starve in the midst of plenty, nor want whilst such abundance streams around us. We often come to Thee with desire for what Thou hast already given. O Lord! we need far more hearts and hands to take the blessings that invite us to participate.

Strengthen our faith and desire, O Lord. Thou hast taught us that Thou wilt fill every open mouth, and that according to our faith it will be unto us. Thou hast told us we have but to ask and have, to desire and to possess. Therefore do we come to Thee, O Lord! acknowledging the sluggishness of our own desires. How often have we misused them for lesser and all uncertain good; how seldom we have lifted them to the height of that longing which never can remain unsatisfied since Thou art faithful and good. Help us to wish most for what is best worthy of being wished. Help us to strive most for that which we are sure to possess if we believingly strive. May the sweet possession of Thyself be our true and enduring riches. Help us thus to live, and so to use all passing events, duties, joys, sorrows as that they may make more sure, more deep, more blessed, our possession of our true Portion, Thine own Self.

Help us to hear and to speak Thy message, take away all the hindrances which may attach to the messenger, and to give this message its glory and its power. We commend one another to Thy gracious care. Comfort all the sorrowful, help all the struggling, and

give our feeble wills strength to resolve what is good for any of us who are struggling with temptations. O Lord! be Thou our strength, and give us the victory through Jesus Christ. In all changing conditions be Thou beside us with the appropriate gifts as Thou knowest how to give them. May Thy word have free course and be glorified, and so all the sorrows, all the desires, all the sins, of this poor distracted yet redeemed world be soothed and healed and gladdened.

And now, Lord, we desire to commend ourselves to Thy gracious care, and beseech Thee to take us into Thy loving keeping, and help us, through Jesus Christ our Lord.

LX

BLESSED be God! Who hath not turned away our prayer nor His mercy from us. We thank Thee, O Lord, that even our poor tongues are permitted to extol Thee. May our hearts be filled and deeply impressed with the sense of Thy love, Thy sweetness, Thy readiness to hear, Thy loving forbearance with the imperfection of our praises, and the folly too often of our petitions.

We bless Thee that not only hast Thou an ear and a hand to help, but that Thou dost teach us how to pray, and what to pray for. We need Thy teaching, for surely our hearts often deceive us and lead us away, and our notions of what is good for us are not Thy will. But we bless Thee that though sometimes, in the mystery of Thy providence Thy ways are different from what we would have them, yet they are always higher than our ways as the heavens are higher than the earth. And they always, as the

heavens do, send down on earth sweet influences, of dew and sunshine and rain, which make the barren places to rejoice and blossom as the rose. May it be so with us, O Lord! May our emptiness be more and more filled with Thy fulness, our weakness transformed into Thy strength, and all our ignorant wishes brought into submission to the perfect wisdom and perfect love of Thy dealings with us; so that our hearts may be set free to desire most earnestly the best things, and to covet strongly the true and only good.

Bring us, we pray Thee, more and more into fellowship with, and possession of, Thine own self, Who art our Portion and the Strength of our hearts for ever. Clear out of our thoughts and wishes everything that is contrary to Thy holy will, O Lord! Give us strength, we beseech Thee, to subdue and to hold well in hand all our tastes and tendencies, our passions and desires, and that we may more and more be able to bring our whole selves to be governed by Thee. 'If we regard iniquity in our hearts the Lord will not hear us.' We beseech Thee that Thou wouldst help us to fight against all evil that may be lurking there, and to submit ourselves more willingly, consciously, constantly to Thy discipline, which has no other end in view but our perfecting in the participation of Thy holiness. Teach us the meaning of life; teach us to see great possibilities and purposes in the small things that befall us. Interpret for us our difficulties and our trials. May our temptations minister strength by being overcome in Thy power. May our joys feed the flame of our thankful devotion, and everything that we meet with in this life bring us nearer to Thyself, and put us more fully in possession of the life which is life indeed.

We beseech Thee to cleanse our hearts from everything that is contrary to Thy holy will, to clear our eyes that we may see more plainly and substantially the things that are unseen and eternal, to draw our hearts more and more to Thee, and detach them more and more from any intimate attachment to the things that are seen and temporal. Thus, we pray Thee, train and educate us through our days, and help us to be willing, docile, profiting scholars in Thy great school. In Thy great mercy draw near to us, and grant that to-day our public worship and our private meditation, and any work that we may seek to do for Christ's sake, may be full of blessing to ourselves and to others. Grant Thy gracious help for our Saviour Christ's sake.

LXI

GIVE us, O Lord, we beseech Thee, more and more of that helping Spirit to shape our desires and to make our petitions for ourselves and intercession for others conformable to Thy holy will. We thank Thee for all the breadth of assurance, that if we make intercession according to Thy will Thou hearest us; and we would not complain of the limits, for when we are wisest we do not, in our deepest hearts, desire anything that is not in accordance with Thy will. But bow us, we pray Thee, in continual and peaceful submission, and so help us to live exempt from care, and having that great tranquillity which comes to those whose wills are filled with Thine. O Lord, strengthen us day by day that we may live in accordance with our highest conceptions of our duty and relations to Thee, to ourselves, and to others. Keep us from the many temptations and errors which are always seeking to lower our standards,

and dwarf our vision, and make our aims worldly and mean. And help us to follow in Christ's footsteps, and walking to that Light of life as our guiding pillar may we know nothing of darkness.

Help us in our worship; give us Thy words. So shape our utterance, we beseech Thee, that it may present no obstacle to the reception of Thy truth, but may in some humble measure further the same. Oh! purify our motives as we hear and speak. May we not allow by-ends to come in and mar our service and pollute it. Teach us what to say and how to say it, what to hear and how to obey and live. Bless each of us according to our different needs. Go with us in all the variety of the earthly circumstances, difficulties, and joys. If any of us are in sorrow and in trouble let Thy light shine through the mist, change it into a golden glory, and may our sorrows lead us nearer and nearer to Thyself, and then they will be Thy messengers. May we hear in them all the great voice that says to us 'Come up hither.' Take us, O Lord, into Thy gracious keeping; watching over us, love and bless us. Thou wilt be with all who love Thee and try to do Thy will. Clear away, then, our minds from errors, deepen in our lives the influences of Thy truth. May all Thy servants be brought nearer to Thee and from Thee, by word and work. May the word of the Lord sound out. The Lord bless all the many thousands of His Israel, and watch over all who are seeking in this confused and jarring world to bring about the great harmony and order which comes to those who yield to the heavenly law, and the heavenly Lawgiver, Who is Love. Hear us as we wait before Thee; answer and forgive, we pray, through Jesus Christ our Saviour.

LXII

O LORD! Who dwellest in the high and holy place, we thank Thee that though Thou art lifted so high above us we can draw near to Thee, and claim our place in Thy heart, and in Thy thoughts, and our share in Thy merciful deeds to a universe. We bless Thee that notwithstanding all that hang upon Thee we can come with our little cry, with our small wants. And we beseech Thee that Thou wouldst help us, whatever may be our special present condition, to come to Thee with true hearts in full assurance of faith, believing that of a truth it is no vain thing to call upon the Lord. Let not our oblations be vain, we beseech Thee. May our hands be clean and our hearts pure, that Thou mayest hear us. Teach us what we need most; give us the wisdom that shall desire most earnestly the most necessary and best things, and honour our confidence and faith with Thy love on the great sacrifice of Thy dear Son, on His intercession before the Throne, and on Thy assurance that Thou wilt give Thy Holy Spirit to them that ask Thee, that it may correct our foolish desires, and coax our wishes and inclinations and longings and petitions to flow in the channels marked out for them by Thy holy will.

O Lord! whatever burdens we may have on our hearts we dare not ask Thee to take them away unless it be Thy will to do so, but we dare to ask Thee to fit us to carry the load, and to get out of it good. And grant that if clouds and darkness may, in any measure, wrap our faith or our minds these may only be the background on which the light of the love of a present God may be the more brightly displayed. We thank Thee even for the depths of the mysteries of Thy provi-

dence which have often made us stagger, which may be darkening some of our hearts now. And we pray, O Lord ! that we may more and more rise into a higher region where there is light only ; and being taught of God may be able in some measure to look upon all His providences as He does ; and to realise not only in thought but in experience the great purpose for which Thou dost send all Thy varying dealings and gifts, that we may be partakers of Thy holiness, and out of the ways of Time may gather the treasure that shall never pass.

O help us, of Thy great mercy, that drawing near to Thee of a truth we may find ourselves ever coming nearer and more blessedly near to the great Light, the great Love, the great Peace. We thank Thee that we can thus bring our poor selves, our petitions and desires to Thy Throne. And we pray Thee to help us to-day in all our public worship, in all our various duties, in our private meditations, in our solitary prayers ; and to grant that from this day's peaceful rest and cessation from ordinary avocations, and from the memories and the hopes of a risen Saviour and a resurrection of all that sleep in Him, and from all the associations and habitudes of this day of public worship, we may gather some blessings that shall deepen our faith, confirm our confidence, warm our love, and make more thoroughgoing and more operative in our lives the resolve to do Thy holy will and to please Thee.

We pray Thee to be near us all, to forgive our many shortcomings, our errors of judgment and of practice. Enlighten us, we pray Thee, by Thy continual illumination, and may we never quench nor darken that light by clouds rising from our own evil hearts ; but that Thou wouldst help us, having light, to rejoice in the

Light, and to walk by the Light, that we may all be children of the Light. Hear us, we beseech Thee; mercifully forgive and accept and bless us, through Jesus Christ our Saviour.

LXIII

O LORD our God, we thank Thee for that assurance that Thou art the Father of lights with Whom is no variableness, and that all gifts which come from that Fountain of light are like itself—perfect. So with thankful acceptance of all which Thou dost appoint, and desiring to be fellow-workers with Thee, in so far as that we shall try to sympathise with Thy meaning, and to follow out Thy purpose in all the changes of our condition and lot, we would bow before Thee now. Of Thy great love give us some message which may be from Thyself, and we pray that Thou wouldst help us all to hear as well as to speak the word of the living God ‘which abideth forever.’

Grant to us, as a Christian community, more and more of the conformity of our Master, and consistency in our lives. May we day by day, as we take up the burden of common, familiar, and often wearisome duties, find that strength comes to us according to our needs, and that holding Fellowship with Thee through Thy dear Son, the crooked things may become straight and the rough places plain. May we be helped to understand all that we ought to be and do; may we be quickened gladly to perform Thy holy will, and clearly to apprehend Thy blessed presence; do Thou help any of us that have any special need of special aid. Give patience, give trust, give victory; and grant, we pray Thee, that all of us who may be anyways

exercised by any sorrow may find there the peaceable fruits which it is meant to bring to bear, and will bear for them who are rightly exercised thereby.

We thank Thee for all mercies which, individually, and as a church, and congregation, we have received at Thy hands. And we pray Thee to forgive all the imperfections of our service; and to grant that in the days yet to come, be they few or many, the word of the Lord may be faithfully preached here, and the message of God's great love find its way into many hearts and lives. With like blessings we beseech Thee to visit all communions of Christian people in this city, in this land, and throughout the world. And grant that Thy servants may become more completely Thy instruments, and more manifestly before men be the worthy bearers of Thy word and the faithful witnesses to their Lord.

Hear us, we beseech Thee, when we cry; let Thy blessings descend upon us, and upon all who love the Lord Jesus Christ, and upon all wandering souls; on each let fall, O Lord! some gleam of light. And lead this weary, warring, distracted world to the apprehension of the Kingdom of Jesus Christ, and the possession of the righteousness and peace and joy which belong to it.

We would commit ourselves to Thy loving hands, and pray for Thy gracious presence and help, through Jesus Christ our Lord and Saviour.

LXIV

O LORD! Who art the Sun and Shield, giving light and life and defence and every good, we thank Thee for all the blessedness that comes to those who dwell in Thy

house, and to those who journey towards it. We thank Thee for the joy of the search after Thee, for the joy of the possession of Thee. We thank Thee that there are desires which are only less blessed than their satisfying. And we pray Thee that Thou wouldst help us by faith and trust in Thyself to have in ourselves both the blessing of them that dwell in Thy house, and of them 'in whose heart are the ways' towards it.

We beseech Thee to be near each of us this morning in our worship here, and to lift away from hearts and minds any and every thing that may stand between us and God. May no wandering thoughts rob us of the joy of fellowship with thee. May no doubts darken our sky, may no indifference or negligence keep us from the light of Thy face. May we be able to leave behind anything and everything that would rob us of the true fellowship with God. May we remember weaknesses and difficulties and trials, or joys or sorrows, or treasures or conflicts, and everything that belongs to this present, only in so far as memory may make us cleave the closer to Thyself, and apply to our special wants more closely Thine all-sufficiency.

We thank Thee, O Lord, that in all our weakness we can confidently turn to Thee, and we bless Thee that none have ever sought Thee and found Thee not, though sometimes our finding is very different from what we in our search expected. And yet, O Lord, we bless Thee for all the manifold ways in which Thou dost reveal Thyself to us, and we praise Thee that we can believe that Thou dost make Thyself known even when we think Thou art hiding Thyself. And we thank Thee that we can cast ourselves upon Thee, and leave to Thee to determine in what shape Thy strength shall come. O Lord! we only know we need Thee; we do

not know how Thou canst best give us Thyself. So we pray for submission as well as for trust; and we beseech Thee that Thou wouldst give us that patient wisdom and clear insight which shall rightly interpret all which else might be baffling mystery, and shall untie all the knots in Thy providence, in so far as these need to be lessened and solved to our present knowledge.

We pray Thee to lift all our hearts now to Thyself. We thank Thee for all the associations of this place, for all the influences of our present occupation, for the memories of the past, for the great truths which this day preaches to us all, of a Christ that died, yea! rather, that is risen again, Who is even at the right hand of God, and who is with us, though He is in the heavens, and ready to help us that we too may rise from the death of sin and live unto God. May it be so with us all. May we this day find that it is no vain thing to wait upon the Lord. We beseech Thee to hear us, and grant Thy presence in our worship, for Christ our Saviour's sake.

LXV

O LORD! we thank Thee that we see the heavens opened, and that great ladder between earth and Heaven, even Thy Son Jesus Christ, through Whom all Thy blessings come down to us. And we can climb to Thee; and we beseech Thee that our hearts and thoughts may more constantly turn to Him, and that to us earth may be more crowded with Heaven, and life with God, than it ever has been in the past. Help us day by day, in all the smallnesses of our continually returning duties, to apprehend the greatness of Thy purpose, and to feel that we have Thy strength being

ministered unto us according to our need, and according to our desire. And help us, O Lord, day by day to walk in the light of Thy face, and to be continually blessed with the vision of greater and greater things, because we continually draw nearer to Thyself. Help us in this our act of worship. Give us, we pray Thee, Thy word to speak; grant that there may be nothing in our utterance of it which may mar its effect; but may it find its way, by Thy gracious influence accompanying it, into the very depths of our lives, and there mould us more and more according to Thine own will.

We thank Thee, Lord, for the strength and blessing that many of us have received in our meetings together here; and we beseech Thee that Thou wouldst still be with us, and grant that the light of Thy face may not be less bright, but growingly clear and radiant to us in what may yet remain for us of worship together in this place. And we would commend one another to Thy loving care, and pray Thee to be near us all, according to our different necessities.

We pray Thee to hear us for all Christian people, and we ask that they may have understanding of the times, to know what they ought to do; and keep us, we pray Thee, from anything of our individual lives and influences that may foster the disposition against each of Thy counsels, and of Thy commandments.

We commend all whom we remember at this hour to Thy gracious care; and thank Thee that still, in the hour of clouds and darkness, we can believe that verily there is a God that judgeth in the earth.

Hear us and forgive our sin; grant us Thy help, for our Lord Christ's sake.

LXVI

O LORD, we would come into Thy presence not only *though* but *because* Thou art a consuming fire. With reverence and godly fear we would draw near, with that fear which has in it no torment; and we bow ourselves before Thee, and pray that we may be baptised in the Holy Ghost and in fire; and that the merciful cleansing flame may purge away all our dross and tin, and may deliver our souls from all their stain, and make us pure after the pattern of Thine own purity.

O Lord, we bless Thee that none of us need to dread Thee whilst all of us are bound to fear Thee. We bless Thee for that perfect love which casts out dread and deepens reverence. And we pray that in our hearts it may always dwell, making us very peaceful and very strong to do Thy will, and to bear Thy will. O help us to hold fast the grace that Thou hast given us, and since the Kingdom cannot be moved may we who partake of such stable and unchangeable good be stable and unchangeable likewise. Help us to be steadfast and immovable, to grasp Thy firm salvation with a firm hold; and always to realise in our daily experience, and in the little things of life, that God is with us of a truth, and that to bless.

We thank Thee, O Lord, for all the great gifts which Thou dost bestow upon us. We beseech Thee that we may indeed come, even whilst here on earth, to the heavenly Jerusalem; and may have for our companions the Judge of all, and the Mediator of the new Covenant, and the spirits of the just made perfect, and be part of that innumerable assembly which rejoices in Thee. Surround us, we pray Thee, with all Thy good gifts according to our need, and oh! help us, day by day, to

set ourselves with more vigour and perseverance to run the race that is set before us. May we ever indeed be looking to Christ. Oh that our lives were fuller of Him. Oh that we knew more of the power of His Resurrection, lifting us above our death of sin and bringing us into joyfulness of life in God, hid there with Jesus Christ. Grant us, we beseech Thee, grace day by day to be looking away from all else unto Jesus, the Author and Finisher of our faith; and may we have Him for our Leader and Commander, Him for our example, Him for our Companion, Him for our Guide. May He be with us the way to God, and our Friend on the way.

We beseech Thee that Thou wouldst pour upon us all needful grace for daily duty. O Lord, work Thou through us and help us to submit ourselves to Thy gracious influences. May the Spirit of the living God dwell in our hearts, and we be coming nearer and nearer to Thee, O Lord, every day that we live. Help us to accept all Thy varying providences with thankfulness and trust. If any of us are even now having to pass through dark valleys and deep waters, do Thou give us grace to trust in Thee, and to lay to heart the blessed words which we have been reading, which encourage us to take our sorrows as the sign of our Sonship. May they be so indeed to us all, and may none of us waste these precious gifts of Thy hand. Let Thy rod and Thy staff comfort us, and whatever Thou dost please to appoint for us may we so receive it as that it shall work for us the peaceable fruit of righteousness. Help us therefore never to faint or fear, but lift up the hands that hang down, and strengthen the feeble knees, and make paths for our feet.

Guide us by Thy gracious counsel. Set us free from the bonds which we ourselves have not the strength,

and often not the inclination, to break. And grant that every one of us may day by day make it our business to grow in the grace and knowledge of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ. O Lord, lift away all weights from our spirits and help us to cast them away ; and as for the sin that surrounds us, and is within us, may we put it away too, and run with perseverance the race that is set before us. Help us as we try to meditate together upon what may be profitable to our spirits. Do Thou speak some word to each of us, and grant that as we have often found it in time past, so we may often find it now that Thou art present with us in our worship, and that Thou Thyself art speaking comfortably to our hearts.

We pray that each of us, according to our various occupations, circumstances and temptations, may find Thee near us, to bless us and guide us in all our ways. Prosper, in so far as Thou seest it to be good, the work of our hands upon us ; and grant that it may indeed be Thy work which we do, and so bless it to the springing thereof.

We commend ourselves to Thy gracious care. We would not forget thankfulness for all Thy merciful benefits towards us ; and we beseech Thee that our hearts and minds may now be brought into closer fellowship with Thee, and that Thou wouldst draw very near to each heart in Thy presence, and help us all to wait upon our God.

We pray for all that are in any kind of sorrow or trouble. We beseech Thee to comfort the hearts of Thy servants, and to grant light to them that sit in darkness, and a happy issue out of all their troubles—the happiest issue, that they shall by them be brought nearer to God. O Lord, hear us now ; in Thy mercy

forgive us ; pardon the sins of our low faith, and look upon our Intercessor before the Throne, in Whom, and in Whose past and present work we trusting may bring our petitions, even Jesus Christ our crucified and crowned Lord.

LXVII

O LORD our God, Who art always near us, and ready to come down to us, lift us up to Thee, we beseech Thee ; and help us now that in our deepest hearts we may be aware of Thy sweet and strength-giving Presence, and may reach out our desires towards Thyself.

We thank Thee that amidst the many occupations, and, peradventure, troubles and cares of another day, we have the opportunity of gathering ourselves together, and helping each other's weakness to be strong. We thank Thee for all the blessings that come to those who in secret and solitude seek Thy face. We thank Thee for all the blessings which come to those who, in company with others, draw near to Thee ; and we beseech Thee that we may, in our own experience now, unite both conditions and possess both blessings. We would draw near to Thee each for ourselves. We would feel that we are not alone when we approach Thee. We pray that Thy Spirit may be poured out upon us, and that we may be helped in all the hour of our service now ; that our thoughts may be lifted up towards Thee, and we may hear that voice which Christ's sheep do hear, and hearing follow.

We thank Thee for that good Shepherd, we thank Thee for that Door into the fold of God. We bless Thee that He hath laid down His life for the sheep. We thank Thee that this sacrifice of His brings life to

us, and abundance of all needful good. We beseech Thee that for none of us may it be in vain that we hear the good news. May we never self-willedly wander in paths of our own choosing, but may we ever follow the footsteps of the flock, and be guided by the Shepherd's care. We thank Thee that we can so fully cast ourselves upon Thy promised help and mercy; and that we, as Thy servants of old, can say that if the Lord is our Shepherd we shall not want, and can be sure that goodness will follow us, as it has followed us, all the days of our lives; and that when these days are over, we may still hope to dwell in the house of the Lord for ever.

O Lord, accept our praises for Thy continual mercies to us, for all the faithful fulfilment of these great promises which Thou hast bestowed; and draw us nearer to Thee that we may live more doubly obedient to Thy leading, and more sweetly dependent upon Thy grace and strength, more aware of Thy guidance and more disposed to obey it.

We come to Thee this evening, and acknowledge our own weakness and manifold sins. O Lord, do Thou purge our hearts, we pray Thee, from every drop of bitterness. May there be no recognised and permitted evil thing in us. May we have grace given to us to search our own spirits as with the candle of the Lord, and do Thou Thyself search us and try us, and reveal to us, we pray Thee, our secret faults, the things of which we are not aware in us, which are contrary to Thy holy will. May we possess the happiness of the man who condemneth not himself in the things that he alloweth, and we pray Thee that Thou wouldst forgive all that has been contrary to Thy will. And, O Lord, help us, day by day, to learn more deeply the

truth as it is in Jesus, that we may be transformed by the renewing of our minds, and may yield ourselves, in the fullest sense, living sacrifices.

We bless Thee for all the blessedness that comes to those who are not their own, and do not desire to be so; and we pray for deliverance from ourselves, and beseech Thee that Thou wouldst help us to be the priests and the temples and the sacrifices, offering up ourselves to God in reliance on that great Sacrifice, which does for each of us what no sacrifice of ours can do for ourselves, as the propitiation for our sins.

Be with us, we beseech Thee, in our worship of this evening; and help us to hear, to speak, and to meditate upon Thy great, true, and blessed promises, and to carry away from this meeting some impulses that may abide with us, and may go to strengthening the good in our souls, and to weakening all the evil. We desire to commend one another to Thy care, and we beseech Thee to be near any of us who may have any specially felt need of grace and help from Thyself. We thank Thee, O Lord, that as of old it is true that in all Thy children's afflictions Thou art afflicted, and the Angel of Thy Presence saves them. May it be so with each of us, and if there are any of us to whom the promise may be specially needful and grateful this evening, fulfil it, O Lord, even now in our own experience. We bless Thee that we do not need to ask Thee for the removal of the sorrows so much as that we may be chastened and disciplined and profited thereby. We ask Thee to help us to yield ourselves to God, and to stand to the surrender in regard to disappointments, losses, and crosses, and all the burdens of this earthly life, as well as in regard to all the work and activity of mind and hand.

O Lord, bless, we pray Thee, with the outpouring of Thy own Spirit all our work as members of a Christian communion; bring us closer, we pray Thee, to our Lord; and stir up in all the hearts who love and profess to serve Thee here a purer spirit of consecration and a clearer understanding of the purpose for which Thou hast set us in the world, and given us Thy grace, that we may be Thy witnesses to men. May the word of the Lord fructify through us to many. May we all be able to declare to our brethren and to others that we have found the Messiah, and may the declaration be a large part of our felt duty here on earth. We thank Thee for the many ways by which Thy people can show forth the praises of Him that hath called them out of darkness into His marvellous light. We ask Thee that increasingly the members of this Church and congregation may be distinguished by the faithful use of all their duties and declaration, for the glory of God, of the mission of Jesus Christ.

And now we pray for the forgiveness of all that has been amiss in our service, and that Thou wilt give the consciousness of Thy presence and Thy favour, through Jesus Christ our Lord and Saviour.

LXVIII

O LORD our Father, Thou seest all our souls cleave to the dust, but we come pleading Thine own word, and asking Thee to quicken us according to it; and lift us up now, by some bright and happy thought of Thee, Thy sweetness, love, and power, Thy nearness and tenderness, that we may come gladly to our Father's heart, and speak to Thee with confidence and childlike trust. We bless Thee that prayer is a very real thing.

We thank Thee that we do not speak into an empty Heaven, nor into a dull cold ear. We bless Thee that Thou hast taught us that it is better for us to keep our wills within Thy will, and that the confidence which we have is that if we ask anything according to that will Thou hearest us. We know it is better for us so than if any cries of ours could reach Thy purposes. And we beseech Thee that Thou wouldst help us, as the beginning of all our prayers, to bring our wills into harmony with Thine, that every petition may have wrapped up in it, 'Nevertheless not as I will, but as Thou wilt.'

O Lord, we thank Thee for all the peace that comes to those who are wont to make all their requests known unto God, and then to leave them in His hand. We pray that each of us may, in our daily experience, possess that secret of all tranquillity which rests in delighting ourselves in the Lord, that He may then give us the desires of our hearts. May these desires all centre in Thyself, and whatever we wish, and cannot but wish, in regard of outward things, may all these, too, in our eyes, be most precious in the measure in which they may be truly good things. When we ask good things of Thee we often condemn ourselves; and we feel that the petition can never be presented without the confession of how beneath such thoughts our daily lives have fallen. And yet we praise Thee with confidence, O Lord, for Thou 'knowest our frame, and rememberest that we are dust.' And 'like as a father pitieth his children, even so Thou pitiest' us. And though Thou dost disapprove of our failures and sins, we thank Thee that there is compassion as well as disapproval in Thy heart for us. Help us then to come to Thee with loving trust and lowly confidence, and

may we day by day be enabled more completely to walk in Thy light, and to drink in the river of Thy pleasures, and to live the lives that we live in the flesh by the life that we have derived from the fountain of life. We thank Thee, O Father, for all Thy good gifts to us, for the manifold mercies that perish with the using, and often unrecognised and unremembered, and, alas! not seldom pass away misused.

We bless Thee for every benefit of Thy providence, and for all the little things that make up the sum of our daily mercies; and we pray Thee for clear-sighted and grateful hearts that in everything, by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving, we may hallow the smallest of Thy blessings, and make them serve our attaining of greater ones. We bless Thee for all which Thou hast given us to-day, for all which Thou hast averted from us. We thank Thee for guidance; we thank Thee for companionship; we thank Thee for strength to work; we thank Thee for patience, for endurance; and bless Thee that though we have so little served Thou hast so largely bestowed, even whilst we acknowledge that the guidance and the companionship and the strength and the light would all have been far more if we had let them have Thy way with us.

We thank Thee for the opportunity which we have now of withdrawing for an hour from the daily tasks and renewing our communion with Thyself. We beseech Thee that we may have Christ in our midst. May we each of us, coming in His name, have brought our Lord into this assembly. And grant, we beseech Thee, that light from Him, and teaching from Thy word, and gracious influences from Thy good Spirit, may be breathed out upon us all this evening; and that

our hour of worship may be an hour of blessing with each of us, that it may abide with us for many a day.

We would commend to Thee all whom we love. We pray for all that are in any kind of sorrow or trouble. Thou takest away from the midst of Thy children's homes and hearts, and from the midst of Thy Church. But we thank Thee that Thou livest, and we beseech Thee to fill all empty places in private homes and in public work, and that Thou wouldst graciously manifest Thyself to all that are in any way afflicted, in mind, body, or estate, and help them to take the consolations which are freely given to them of God. Thou dost never fail to comfort, though we foolishly often fail to be comforted, and it is all our own fault. We beseech Thy forgiveness, we beseech Thy wisdom. And we pray that any of us, or any known to us, who may this evening be in any kind of sorrow or perplexity, may have the Lord with them, Who bears all burdens and Who lightens all darkness.

And now, O Lord, we would commit ourselves to Thy care once more. We beseech Thee to bless us in our meeting this evening, and always when we gather together for Thy service and worship; and pray that Thou wouldst give us words to speak, at all times, which may be in accordance with Thy holy will; and that Thou wouldst revive Thy work amongst us, and make Thy servants more like what Christ would have them to be; and bring many wanderers back into the fold, that there they may be saved, 'and go in and out and find pasture.' We beseech Thee to hear us now, to give us Thy blessing in our worship, to forgive all our sins, and to speak through us, and to us, and in us all, through Jesus Christ our Lord and Saviour.

LXIX

O LORD our God, Thou hast bid us to have faith in Thee, and Thou hast given us enough knowledge of Thyself, and possession of Thy blessings, to make it a sin and a shame if we do not trust in Thee. But our hearts are very weak, O Lord, and we cleave to the things here far too strongly, and so strongly does the current of our affections and desires set towards the things seen and temporal that it is hard for us to have any living and working faith in the unseen and the eternal. So Thy commandments drive us to Thyself to give what Thou commandest. And we beseech Thee that Thou wouldst help each of us to believe in God, and to believe also in Jesus Christ. And especially, Lord, when we come to Thee in the outward form and action of prayer, may there be a triumph of faith in our hearts, believing that we have the things which we desire. That we may so believe, keep us, we pray Thee, from all foolish desires about which we never can be sure that it is Thy will to give them. Concerning all these may our prayer be humbly submissive, and ever having in its depths, 'Not my will, but Thine.' And the less eagerly we set our affections and desires on this doubtful good, may we fix them on that which is certainly for our good, and which Thou art certainly longing to give us.

Lord! we pray for light, we pray for love, we pray for guidance, we pray for grace, we pray for peace, for power, for pardon, and for all mercies which Thou hast laid up for us in Jesus Christ. And we pray that our faith in Him may be more deep, real, constant, and effective in our lives; and may do more to lift us into

the likeness of our Lord, and to make us ashamed of our own past selves and follies.

We would not limit Thy grace, O Lord; we believe that Thou canst do exceeding abundant above all that we can ask or think. And so we would come, and with steadfast confidence would beseech Thee for the great things which Thou hast promised, and which Thou hast laid up for us in Jesus Christ our Lord. Thou hast taught us to open our mouths wide, and Thou hast promised to fill the widest opened. Thou hast put petitions into our lips which we durst not have framed for ourselves. And so we ask Thee that Christ may dwell in our hearts by faith, and that we may know 'the height and breadth and depth and length of that love which passeth knowledge'; that we may be 'filled with all the fulness of God.' And in regard, O Lord, to other things, Thou knowest what we have need of. Thou hast declared to us that it is Thy good pleasure to give us the Kingdom, and Thou wilt not starve Thy children on the road to it.

We beseech Thee, then, that Thou wouldst be near us day by day, and deal out to us, by Thy loving wisdom, the things that we most need. And help us, in Thy loving wisdom, to acquiesce in Thine appointment, and not to murmur at what is withdrawn, nor to complain because of what is not given.

We beseech Thee to lead us by Thy counsel, and to help us that we may in everything, by prayer, and supplication, and thanksgiving, make our requests known to Thee. And then, O Lord, let Thy peace, which passeth understanding, come into our hearts and minds.

Be near us as we are gathered in Thy presence; help us in this hour of worship. Give us some thoughts

and words which may be helpful and profitable, and may lead us into the secret place of the Most High. And strengthen us for all duty ; we pray that Thy good Spirit may be upon us in all our work and worship as a congregation, and that Thou wouldst guide us by Thy counsel ; that Thou wouldst make us more fit to receive the blessing, and more worthy to be Thy instruments ; and that Thou wouldst help us all, day by day, to remember Whose we are and Whom we ought to serve ; and let Thy power be present among us in all our gatherings, and the word of the Lord be magnified.

We commend one another to Thy care ; we pray for all the weary and the sorrowful. We would especially commend to Thee those on beds of sickness, and those that watch by them ; and pray that Thou wouldst come near to all such suffering souls or households, and give Thy peace and Thy felt presence.

And now, O Lord, take us into Thy gracious care, and in Thy mercy forgive and bless us, through Christ our Saviour.

LXX

O LORD our God, teach us to pray, we beseech Thee ; and help us now to feel that we are indeed speaking to one that hears, and that Thy heart is open of a truth for us, and Thy hands laden with gifts which Thou dost infinitely delight to bestow. O Lord ! we sometimes think it strange that we can ever forget Thee as completely as we do, and when we draw near again to Thee in this hour of prayer we cannot but be conscious of the difference between the attitude of our minds and hearts when we seek to join ourselves to Thee in that which is common to them throughout so much of our

days. Therefore we would come to Thee, O Lord, with humble petitions that Thou wouldst pardon all that Thou hast seen amiss in us; and whatever there may have been in us, in the ordering of our lives, or in the work which has occupied us, that has borne us away from Thee, Thou wouldst forgive the weakness that we have displayed; and wouldst help us now to come near to Thyself, though it be ashamed and confounded, yet sure of Thy forgiveness, and able to say that we trust in the Lord our God.

Strengthen and help us in our service now, O Lord; may the great words that we have been reading together enter into our hearts and minds, and influence us in our daily lives. May we all be pressing towards the mark. May we all be looking for the Lord Jesus Christ as our Saviour, and forget the things that are behind except in so far as remembering them may make us thankful to Thee, and distrustful of ourselves and confident in Thyself. And may we all be reaching forth unto the things that are before.

O Lord, we have had enough of our own righteousness, and we pray that we may know Jesus Christ more deeply, more entirely, more happily and constantly, and may have Him dwelling in our hearts as the very Life of our lives, and our Portion, our Righteousness, and our Strength. We bless Thee for the excellency of the knowledge of Christ Jesus our Lord, which makes all heavy weights of earthly sorrow light as feathers, and dims the glory of all earthly good. And we pray that Thou wouldst help us more and more to come to that knowledge, that it may keep us in the paths of righteousness, and fill our hearts and minds with the joy that cannot be taken from us, and the peace that passes understanding.

And help us, O Lord, we pray Thee, in our daily life, to be rigid with ourselves, and charitable and gracious with all others. Help us to measure ourselves by the measuring-rod of the Angel, and not by the measurement of man. And may we ever seek to be conformed to the likeness of Thy dear Son; and to carry out in all the small affairs of daily life, and in the common things of constantly recurring duty, the great precepts of Thy Word, and the great Example of our Lord and Saviour. We would confess before Thee how often we have fallen beneath the one, and contradicted the other; and we beseech Thee that Thou wouldst help us growingly to become filled with Thy Spirit, and growingly to manifest that we are so by our holy living amongst men.

We pray Thee to look down upon each here before Thee this evening. We thank Thee for all the great mercies that we have realised in our daily lives and experience; and pray that Thou wouldst still be with us, and guide us by Thy counsel, and help us to accept Thy guidance and to follow without reluctance in the path which the Lord marks out for us, whatever it may be. Oh that we may have hearts and wills more completely in conformity with Thine own, so that we shall never murmur, and never regret, and never rebel, but always sit at Thy feet, and follow our Master's call.

We pray Thee to remember all that are in any kind of sorrow or trouble, and to comfort and succour such. O Lord, bind up all broken and wounded spirits, and grant that we may none of us ever turn away from Thy consolations, or waste the precious discipline of which the end is that we should be partakers of Thy holiness.

Now, O Lord, we would commit ourselves once more to Thy gracious care, beseeching Thee that Thou wouldst be very near us, and bless us now. Help us in this hour of service and worship, directing thoughts and opening hearts and minds for the reception, the belief, and the practice of Thy holy will. Be with us when we try to speak, be with us in hearing Thy truth, and grant that our meeting may tend to make us more partakers of the resurrection of Jesus Christ and sharers in His righteousness and glory.

Hear us in our prayer, mercifully forgive and accept us, through Jesus Christ our Lord and Saviour.

LXXI

O LORD, we thank Thee that Thou hast taught us to call Thee the Father of Lights, and to think that every good and perfect gift is from Thee, and that nothing that is not good and perfect does come from Thee. We bless Thee for all that sure confidence which we have that with Thee is no variableness, that Thou art ever mindful of Thy covenant, mindful of Thine own past dealings, mindful of the claims that Thy poor creatures have upon Thee; and that Thou dost so abundantly shower down upon us all things richly to enjoy, and all things requisite and necessary as well for the body as for the soul. Help us then, we pray Thee, to draw near to Thee now with grateful hearts, recognising how full of blessing Thy dealings with each of us has been, and how behind all the daily mercies there lies the unspeakable gift which does not perish with the using, but becomes the greater and more blessed to each of us the more we possess and enjoy it.

We thank Thee for life, we thank Thee more for the

life of God in Jesus Christ Who died—nay, rather, Who is risen again. And we beseech Thee that the blood which shed avails for the cleansing away of our guilt, may, poured into our veins, avail for the hallowing and sanctifying of our whole nature; and may we be partakers of His holiness, and know the power of His Resurrection, because we know and are conformed to the fellowship of the servants.

We have come this evening from very different circumstances. The day's work has called for different qualities from us. We have left behind us homes in divers conditions, but we thank Thee that whatever variety there may be in our necessities the deepest needs of us all are one, and the great Supply for all our needs is One. We would come then to Thee, Lord, and pray, because we have learnt that Thou art the God that givest unto all men liberally and upbraideth not. We bless Thee that though there is much for which we might be upbraided in the misuse that we have made of Thy mercies, in our neglect to take the things that are freely given to us of God, in the slow progress that we have made in the Christian life when its powers were so abundantly waiting to enter into our lives, yet we draw near to Thee, blending with our visions of unworthiness and shortcomings the prayer that Thou wouldst come to us now, and help us that we may indeed open our hearts for the entrance of Thy mercy, and may have that unwavering faith which shall receive everything of the Lord. We would keep steadfast hearts that Thou mayest pour Thy grace into them. We beseech Thee to make our desires after the best things more continual and more operative in our lives, and we pray that Thou wouldst help us to subdue our wishes for lesser good, and our false estimates of

what we need most, and wouldst help us day by day to realise that it is God that is the Portion of our hearts and our Strength for ever.

We beseech Thee to bless us as we are gathered here this evening, and to give to each of us Thy Holy Spirit in our hearts, that our desires may be drawn out to Thee, and the eyes of our understandings being opened we may behold wondrous things out of Thy law and of Thy grace in Jesus Christ our Saviour. May none of us be forgetful hearers and not doers of Thy word. May none of us go away from its mirror 'forgetting what manner of man we are,' but may we all treasure in our hearts the truths which Thou hast continued to reveal to us in Thine Incarnate Word, and in the written Word which bears record of Him; and may we manifest these truths in our lives, and find how true it is that such a man is blessed, not only for, and after, but *in* his deeds.

Be Thou near us as we try to meditate on Thy truth. May it be the guide of our hearts and thoughts. We pray Thee to pour the light of Thy grace into our spirits, that we may behold what Thou dost mean us to see, the glory of Thy love in the words of Thy Revelation. We pray for each in Thy Presence according to all our diverse circumstances. Especially we would commend to Thee any present with us, or belonging to us, though absent from us now, that may be in any kind of sorrow or trouble. We pray Thee to draw near to such now, and to speak Thy gracious, gentle whispers of consolation and of peace to such troubled souls. We thank Thee, O Lord, that Thy children have free access to Thee, and that Thou art ever wont to come near to them who are in any sorrow. We pray that none of us may ever shut Thee out from our sad

moments, and try to find comfort elsewhere than in saying, 'The will of the Lord be done.'

And now, Lord, be with all Thy servants of every communion and name. Be with all such in our city. Grant that the manifestation of Christ's grace may be more powerfully made by all professing Christian communities, and that this great city may be more and more penetrated by the message of God's love in Jesus Christ, and the evils that abound among us may be subdued. And lay the responsibilities of their position and the obligations of their possessions upon Thy servants' hearts; and help all Christian men and women in this and every part of our land to be faithful to their Master, and to do the work for which God has put them here. We pray that Thy blessing may rest upon us. We thank Thee for all Thy great mercies to us. We humbly acknowledge our many unworthinesses and sins, and we lay our hands upon the head of that Sacrifice, and know that our guilt is there.

Hear, answer, and bless us, Lord, through Jesus our Saviour.

LXXII

O LORD, our merciful Father, we thank Thee for the privilege of worship, and that we can draw near to Thee, and be sure that, notwithstanding all our infirmities and sins, Thou dost not turn away our prayer nor Thy mercy from us. Help us that, in deepest reality, and not in mere form and void words, we may all enter into Thy secret place now, and hold fellowship with our Father God. We thank Thee that Thou canst speak to us, and that we do not only need to speak to Thee. We thank Thee that there is such a

thing as conversing with God; and we beseech Thee that Thou wouldst, by Thy good Spirit, speak in all our hearts now, and may our hearts answer Thee, Lord! And when Thou sayest, 'Seek ye My face,' may they straightway answer, 'Thy face, Lord, will we seek.'

We beseech Thee to bless us gathered together thus, turning aside for an hour from daily occupations, cares, sorrows, joys, temptations and conflicts. And we pray that Thy grace may be very manifest to us, and that we may find in our own hearts what Thou hast told us from of old, that it is no vain thing to wait upon the Lord. We bless Thee that Thou hast so often drawn near to Thy servants, and that so many of us can say, 'This poor man cried, and the Lord heard him, and delivered him from all his fears.' And we beseech Thee that we may realise such experiences in our meeting this evening. We feel that the world is too much with us, late and soon. We feel that, day by day, our own weakness makes the things which Thou dost mean to minister to our strength, and to draw us nearer to Thyself, too often occasions for forgetting Thee, and for falling; and we pray that Thou wouldst, by means of such services as this, and by all the other appointments of Thy grace, pour into our hearts Thine own Divine power, and the life that is in Christ Jesus, that thereby our daily lives may be raised nearer to what we know they ought to be, and may in some measure reflect the glory that we have seen in the face of Jesus Christ. May we be mirrors of God, and walking in the world adorning the teaching, and whatever we have to do may we so do it that it shall become a sacrifice.

We beseech Thee for Thy blessing as we are here this evening, direct all our thoughts, draw us nearer to

Thyself, quicken within us any decaying or dying graces, set our feet fast on the rock; and if any of us have to say that our footsteps have well-nigh slipped, do Thou establish our goings, and confirm us in all that is good and holy, and all that is Christlike and Christ-pleasing. To this end we beseech Thee that Thou wouldst bless all the ministrations of Thy truth amongst us from time to time. We thank Thee for many past occasions on which to some of us Thou hast been pleased to make Thyself known through our services together here. And we pray that Thou wouldst still be with us, and yet more abundantly in the days that may still be to come in our relationship together here. And pour out, O Lord, we beseech Thee, of Thy Spirit upon us as a worshipping congregation, that the Name of Jesus Christ may be magnified in our midst, and from us may sound out the word of the Lord.

We would commend to Thee all Christian brethren in all communions and churches, and beseech Thee that the many thousands of Thy Israel may have more and more of the felt presence of Christ with them, and that their arms may be strengthened to fight vigorously for the advancement of that Kingdom which is righteousness and peace and joy in the Holy Ghost.

We would commend to Thee any amongst us that may be in any kind of trouble or sorrow. We beseech Thee to be near all such, to counsel those that are in perplexity, to behold those that are ready to fall, to speak Thy grace and peace to troubled hearts. And for any of us that have heavy burdens to bear do Thou come and help us to get strength from Thee. We thank Thee for all Thy past mercies, we bless Thee for the hope which Thou hast given us far beyond these

changing scenes of earth and time. And we pray that we may so live whilst we still are amongst the things that are seen and temporal as that finally we lose not the things unseen and eternal. Hear us now, O Lord; prepare our hearts to hear and our lips to speak Thy gracious message, and accept us and our poor prayer, through Jesus Christ our Saviour-Lord.

LXXIII

O LORD our God, we bow down before Thee, the blessed and only Potentate, and from the midst of death and the grave lift up our thoughts to Him Who only hast immortality; and we beseech Thee that Thou wouldst shine into our hearts with Thine own light, with that light which we can approach unto, and give us to see Thee in the face of Jesus Christ. We thank Thee that all in Thyself which puts us so far from Thee is brought near us in that Word that was made flesh, so that we can come even to Thy majesty and draw near to Thy heart, sinful as we are, and beseech Thee to love us as Thy children, and to give to us the spirit of adoption whereby we may cry, 'Abba! Father!'

O Lord! help us, we pray Thee, looking up to Thee, to see in Thee the living God Who giveth us richly all things to enjoy, and so to bring all our gladness to be hallowed in Thy presence, and all our possessions to be held in stewardship for Thee, and to be used to Thy glory. And go with us, we pray Thee, through all the various scenes of daily life, and help us in them all to lay hold on the eternal life that is brought near to them by our faithful use of the life that passes away.

We thank Thee, O Lord, that we can come to Thee thus with all the burden of our weakness and weariness.

ness, of our cares and sorrows, of our failures and sins ; and can beseech Thee that Thou wouldst take all the weight away from us, and help us with free hearts to draw nearer to Thyself and to live evermore in the light of Thy face. When we think of what we are, and what Thou wouldst have us to be, and of what we might be if we were faithful in our use of Thy gifts to us, we feel that no confession can be too humble. But we thank Thee that the lightest word of penitence is music in Thy ear. We pray that Thou wouldst teach us to understand ourselves fully, and to realise more completely than we have ever done how solemn and great are the demands that Thou dost make upon us, and the possibilities which Thou dost open to us.

(O Lord ! help us to gather into our hearts, and to make influential in our lives, larger and ever-increasing measures of Thy grace that is stored for us in Jesus Christ ; and may we be able to do and to bear all things through that Christ Who ‘strengthens us with might by His Spirit in the inner man.’ Go with us, we beseech Thee, according to all the variety of our daily duties and present circumstances. We believe that Thou dost appoint, with fatherly care, to each of us our necessary share of joy or sorrow, of health and pain. And we pray that Thou wouldst help us to recognise more fully than we ever have done, and more constantly than we have done, Thy real presence in our daily lives, and Thy sweet ordering of all that is. And we beseech Thee to strengthen us to get all the good that Thou dost mean out of every changing condition here below, that these may all tend, like breaking waves of the sea, to carry us in their current to the harbour.

We pray Thee to strengthen us with might by the

Spirit in the inner man, that we may use all things here as helps and leaders to Thyself. Forgive all the imperfections of our past, strengthen us for better service in the time to come. Enable us to realise more completely and joyously Thy continual presence with us. May it never be a dread, but always a delight, to have to say, 'Thou, God, seest us,' and in the light of Thy countenance may we walk unto all pleasing.

Give us Thy presence in our worship this evening. Forgive all the imperfection of our motives, the feebleness of our desires, the sluggishness and slothfulness of our faith. And help us as we bow here before Thee this evening that Thy word may shine out in its glory to us, and that we may be led nearer to Thyself, and made more fit for all the duty of our daily lives by our gathering together thus.

We beseech Thee to be near each of us in our various conditions. Comfort all sad hearts—speak Thy peace to troubled ones. Be very near us each, in all our perplexities and difficulties. And help us in all of them to follow the Lord Who leads us. We pray for Thy help to be given to all Christian people in their various circumstances, that wherever Thy servants are there may be Thy witnesses, and that all men may know whose are Thy children, and Whom they serve.

Accept us as we come near to Thee now, O Lord; forgive our many sins; break up the fallow ground of our hearts; put into our coldness earnest desires after Thee; and make this hour of prayer for us an hour of blessing, and of true communion with the living God. We beseech Thee to hear us, and forgive all our sins, and to bless us now in that great Saviour in Whose Name we present all our petitions.

LXXIV

O LORD our God, we bow before Thee with reverence and trust and godly fear. And we dare to thank Thee that Thou art a consuming fire, for so we have hoped that Thou wilt burn away all our dross, and melt all our hearts, and help us to be as flaming spirits before Thy Throne, having the fire of God within us. Baptize us in that fire of Thy Holy Spirit, and help us to draw near with confidence to Thee, rejoicing in all Thy majesty and in all Thy gentle love, and casting ourselves on that great mercy which none have ever sought in vain. May it be true of us, O Lord, that we come to the Judge of all, and to the Mediator of the new covenant, and to that blood of sprinkling which speaketh better things than that of Abel. Coming thus, may we have all our sin purged away, all our iniquity forgiven, all our deadness quickened, and ourselves made more worthily to dwell with Thee, and to walk in the light of Thy face. And we beseech Thee that Thou wouldst help us day by day to live as those who have indeed come unto Mount Zion, and even whilst we are sojourners and pilgrims here below do, in the depths of our being, dwell in our true home, and sit with Jesus Christ in the heavenly places.

We thank Thee, O Lord, for that blessed union with Thyself, through Thy dear Son, and the outpoured spirit of Thy grace by which we can bring Heaven round us whilst we hear and possess as well as desire the fullness of joy that is at Thy right hand. And may our daily experience be more like what Thou dost wish it to be, and we more continually and deeply and calmly possessors of, as well as hoping for, the inheritance which is ours.

We thank Thee that we not merely shall be, but are, heirs of God and joint-heirs with Christ. And though it doth not yet appear what we shall be, we live here by the faith of joys to come. May we also live by the joy of knowing that now we are the sons of God, and Thou art with us as our Father. Help us, we beseech Thee, to carry such brightening and quickening thoughts into all the difficulties and duties of our daily life; and if, as is perchance the case, some of us may have special burdens to bear to-day, do Thou give special gifts to such, and help each of us to find in that great truth which belongs to us all the message that we each require. May Jesus Christ be more and more the Object of all our desires, the Home of our hearts, the Goal of our efforts. And by Him and for Him may we live, and ever be journeying towards Him.

We beseech Thee to bless us now. May Thy loving hand be upon each of us, and Thy Spirit open our minds to understand, and our hearts and wills to receive and to obey the great message of Thy salvation. We bless Thee for all the assurance we have that Thy word shall not return unto Thee void, and we pray that nothing in us may be able to make it void, neither imperfection of hearer nor of speaker; but that we, weak as we are, may yet be brought closer together to our Father in Heaven, and made to carry away for some operative influence in our lives the great words of Thy truth and our salvation.

Be merciful to all of us according to our several requirements. Guide each of us in our daily duties; help us to put Thy love into them; and however small they may be, and however often we may have had to do them, and however often symptoms of monotony may be likely to breed discord or contempt, may we gather

ourselves together for our smallest tasks, and let nothing be done except for Thy sake. And help us to win the victory over our own foolish weak selves. (May the old man be more and more depressed in each of us, and the new man exalted.) May the life of Christ drive out the life of self, and may the joy of the Lord abide in us to make us fruitful.

O Lord, accept us as we come to Thee now. Bless all our brethren, present or absent. Be with any of them who may be in sick-chambers or on sick-beds. And to watchers and to those tended do Thou give the consciousness of Thy presence as the great Physician Who heals the spirit even when the body is decayed. We beseech Thee to bless all Christian people, all communities of such, and all the work of Thy servants throughout the world, done imperfectly, we know, and with very mingled motives, and with much folly and weakness, but yet in some measure done for Thy dear sake, and to spread the glory of the Lord Whom we love. We beseech Thee that He may more and more be recognised by men as what He is, the Saviour of the world; and that Thy people may understand better, and realise more in their own daily experience the abundance of the wealth and the all-sufficiency of the power which they have in Christ their Saviour, in Whose Name we pray Thee to hear us now.

LXXV

O LORD, most merciful, and near us, we seek to be near Thee, and to feel Thy presence, the touch of Thy hand, and the joy of Thy Spirit. Help us, we beseech Thee, to approach Thee now, not only in outward form or with words of course, but in our lowly and trustful

hearts may we realise Thy presence. We thank Thee that the light has been manifested, that the darkness is past; and beseech Thee that it may be past in our hearts, and that we may walk in the light. May our joy be full because we know that which was from the beginning; and may our eyes behold, and our hands handle that Word of Life by the vision and the touch of humble faith, and constant cleaving to Him.

We thank Thee that we are not left to grope in the darkness. We thank Thee that we are not left to fight alone. We thank Thee that for mind and heart and will, and all our being, there is enough and more than enough in that one Name which is above every name, and in the great truth that God is manifest in the flesh. Blessed be Thy gracious dealings with us which have taught us how true it is that in Thee is no darkness at all. We have often been afraid of Thee, often thought hard things of Thee, often clothed Thine image in the garb of our own weakness, and have thought of Thee as seen through the mists of our own sin. But we bless Thee that Thou hast swept away all that, and that we know now that Thou art not austere, reaping where Thou didst not sow, and gathering where Thou didst not straw, but that Thou art the giving God, the forgiving God, Who dost bestow upon Thy people that which Thou dost command, and dost give unto them all the things which Thou dost delight in beholding them possess. So we come to Thee and ask that into our emptiness Thy fullness may flow, and that we may not only be made to drink of the river of Thy pleasures, but may draw the better life from the fountain of life, even as we draw the life of the body from Thyself, and that in Thy light we may see light.

We thank Thee for every good gift of Thy hand. We beseech Thee to raise us to the full apprehension of all which Thou dost mean us to possess. Surely Thou hast given us a great deal that we have not taken, and we would confess our own shame and negligence in that we have left Thy gifts lying uncared for and unused. But we pray that Thou wouldst help us to take the things that are freely given to us of God, and taking them to call upon Thy Name. Help us thus to associate Thee with all our blessings, with every kind of good, the smallest and the most fleeting as well as the greatest and the eternal. And strengthen us, we pray Thee, that our whole lives, and our whole selves, which are more than our lives, may be rendered up in sacrifice to God for His unspeakable gift.

We thank thee, O Lord, for this opportunity of turning away from the daily cares of pleasure and constant duties. We beseech thee that whatever burdens any of us may have brought here we may get light upon our paths from Thyself, and from Thee derive new strength for the old duties which abide, and be prepared for any new duties, sorrows, or trials which may emerge upon us from out of the dim future. Help us through all the changing scenes to keep firm hold of the unchanging God, and may we realise more and more that Thou art near us and ready to bless us. Help us when we try to meditate together upon Thy word, and speak Thou to us through Thy strength. Give us the hearing and the understanding heart, and the obedient will; and may we carry into our daily life all that we gain here of insight into Thy mind and heart, and of wish to serve and love Thee. Pour out Thy blessing upon us whensoever we gather together.

And make us, united here together in the bands of professed Christian fellowship, more truly a church of Jesus Christ after His mind and heart. May all the members of this community love their profession, and adorn the teaching in all things. And may each of us find work to do in the Master's vineyard, and none of us take refuge in the pretext that no man hath hired us. Surely Thou hast hired us, and given us plentiful wages beforehand. Help us all to be Thy workers.

And now, O Lord, we desire to commend ourselves to Thy gracious care, beseeching Thee to forgive all that is amiss in our dispositions and characters, and all that has been sinful and wrong in our conduct, and anything that to-day has been contrary to Thy holy will. And hear us now, and accept and bless us, for our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ's sake.

LXXVI

WE thank Thee, O Lord, for Him Who intercedes for us before the Throne. We thank Thee for that Divine Spirit that intercedes in us. And we beseech Thee that we, who know not what to pray for as we ought, may be helped by that indwelling Spirit of supplication, that our desires may be such as Thou dost delight to give, and be according to the will of God. And we beseech Thee that when, as now, we come to Thee, we may ever be resting our whole hope and confidence, and grounding all our plea upon that perfect sacrifice, Him Who hath entered within the veil for us, and is in Thy presence our High Priest and Intercessor.

We beseech Thee, Lord, to strengthen us that we may indeed keep firm hold of the love of God which is in Christ Jesus our Lord; and that nothing may be

able to separate us therefrom, because nothing has power to draw away our faith and confidence from our Saviour. We beseech Thee that in all the variety of our daily conflicts and struggles, and whatever other influences may be brought to bear upon us, and whatever allies these may find in our own hearts, Thou wouldst steady our tremulous faith and increase our feeble desires. Unite our hearts to fear Thy Name, O Lord, and may there be less distance than there often is between Thy requirement that we should love Thee with all our heart, and mind, and will, and strength, and the love that we do bring to Thee.

Forgive the imperfections of our highest desires, of our purest faith, of our warmest love, of our most submissive obedience. We bless Thee that He Who bears upon His heart the names of the tribes bears the iniquity of our holy things, and bears it away. And we beseech Thee that through Jesus Christ there may now come to every one of us some communication of Thine own life-power, some gift that may make the things unseen and eternal more real and clear and dear to every one of us, and we be lifted up in some measure above our ordinary selves by the hour of united worship in Thy presence. O Lord, we have to thank Thee for a thousand blessings, for many daily gifts which we too often accept without remembering the hand that gave, and so without feeling our responsibility to Thee and to Thy stewards.

We beseech Thee that we may carry a clear discernment of Thy presence with us into all our daily duties and all our daily mercies. And we pray that day by day Thou wouldst go with us in our various occupations and tasks, and wouldst teach us to hallow the common things of life, and to offer all our works to

Thee. May we so live as to be ever in the secret place of the Most High, beholding Thy beauty and inquiring in Thy Temple. And strengthen, we pray Thee, the hope within us that is never put to shame, and grant that the brightness of our hope may be the measure of the patience of our waiting. And do Thou strengthen us in the midst of all our various work ever to be looking beyond to the things unseen, and ever to be walking in the light of Thy face.

O Lord, receive our thanks for all Thy past mercies to us, which, for many years for some of us, Thou hast manifested in these services. We pray Thee that Thou wouldst still be with us; that Thou wouldst help us ever to draw near to Thee; and that the word of the Lord may be ministered among us, in its purity and in its power, and with the demonstration of Thy present Spirit. We pray for all whom we may love, present or absent. We would desire to commend to Thee all Thy sorrowing servants; if there are any such here, do Thou give them wisdom and patience, peace and victory. And, wherever Thou art trying Thy children by Thy paternal discipline, help them to recognise the Father's hand, and to be sure that their sorrows are tokens of His love. And we pray Thee to prosper in like manner, as we have asked for ourselves, all our brethren who are in any form seeking to magnify the Name of Jesus Christ, and to spread His Kingdom. Lord! be with the many thousands of Israel, with all them that love the Lord Jesus Christ in incorruption. And now give us Thy blessing, and draw near to our hearts, and help us to hear, and help us to speak, through Jesus Christ our Lord and Saviour.

LXXVII

O LORD, our gracious Father, from Whom cometh the preparation of the heart, and the answer as well, we would lift up our hearts to Thee now, and submit them to Thy preparation; and pray that Thou wouldst help us to do so, that we may feel that it is no vain thing thus, in outward seeming, to draw near unto God. We would not be of those who worship with their lips whilst their hearts are far from Thee. We would not take upon our tongues words that do not correspond to our inmost feelings and desires. We beseech Thee that we may never be put to shame by our prayers, and that Thou wouldst help us to pray aright. O Lord, we need Thee in all ways, for all things, at all times, and in all corners of our souls, and in every part of our lives. So we ask Thee that Thou wouldst help us to withdraw ourselves from all vain things. May we not be of those who follow after vanities and become vain; but may we follow after Thee, and become like Thee, partakers in some measure of the Godhead, as Thou dost promise that Thou wilt bestow Thyself upon seeking hearts, and wilt never be far from those that turn their faces to Thee.

We come out of very different circumstances; our day's work and trials and joys have been very diverse. But we thank Thee that in all this infinite variety and complexity of circumstances and events which make up our lives Thou art seeking the same ends with us all, and art expressing the same love that embraces us all. And so we would thank Thee for all the way by which the Lord our God has led us, and beseech Thee that we may be taught more clear-sightedly because more believingly to consider what Thou dost with us,

and observing these things may we understand the loving-kindness of the Lord. Oh! do Thou deliver us from the many things in ourselves which we partly know and suspect to be contrary to Thy will, and show us more clearly the loftiness and the greatness of the possibilities of Thy grace in Jesus Christ, and Thy purpose of love concerning each of us. May we make more earnest work of our sanctifying, and feel more and more that it is our highest joy, as well as our bounden duty, to be perfect as our Father in Heaven is perfect; 'and forgetting the things that are behind, may we press toward the mark for the prize of the high calling of God in Christ Jesus.'

O Lord, Thou knowest how little we have been true to Thy calling. Thou hast daily to forgive our departures from the paths of righteousness and our many fallings short of Thy holy will, even as we recognise and know it. But we bless Thee that with Thee there is forgiveness and plenteous redemption that Thou mayest be sought unto. Graciously help us, then, to recognise our own defects and failures, to be thankful for everything that helps us to see Thee, and not even to resent the words of others that may painfully lead to apprehend Thee; but help us at the same time to realise even more clearly the infinite forgiveness of our Father, and His infinite power to mend the marred vessels, and make them as He would have them to be. And lead us day by day to yield ourselves to Thy moulding and working. We believe that Thou art working in Thy people for that selfsame thing, that mortality might be swallowed up of life. And we believe that that is the meaning of all Thy dealings with us. May we realise it more completely, and feel it more hopefully, and so be helped to take

all things by their right handle, to understand all things in their deepest meaning, and to recognise that all work together for good.

O Lord! draw near to us now, and help us all who wait before Thee to lay to heart the message that Thou dost bring to us; and do Thou give, too, the message to speak which shall manifestly be Thy will for each of us; and let Thy Holy Spirit touch lips and ears, hearts and wills, that our lives may be the better for our gathering together thus.

We pray for one another, in all the diversity of our conditions. If there are any that have any sorrow or trouble in our hearts or lives or homes we pray Thee to reveal Thy strong and gracious presence to us all that are thus miserable. And where there is weakness or pain of body do Thou give us patience, and as the outward man perishes may the inward man be renewed day by day. We pray Thee to sustain all sad hearts and comfort all sorrowful souls, and speak Thy peace to all troubled minds, and let Thy blessed presence be felt to brood over all storms in life, and to say, 'Peace! be still!'

O Lord, accept our thanks now for Thy great mercies to us, and help us to embrace in the thanksgiving all Thy dealings with us without exception. And now be with us as we wait here before Thee, help and bless us in our several parts of this service, and accept and answer us through Christ our Saviour.

LXXVIII

O LORD! our Father, if we knew Thee as Thou art, and ourselves as we are, how easy and blessed it would be for us to come into Thy presence with ardent

love, with grateful thanksgiving, with unshaken trust, and with earnest petitions. But we thank Thee that though we but dimly see Thee, and but partly know the depth of our own necessities, Thou dost welcome even our imperfect petitions and our imperfect love and trust; and so we would draw near to Thee now with thankfulness that Thou dost let us come, and that Thou dost inhabit even the praises of Israel, and dwell with us who are so far beneath Thee. Lift us, we beseech Thee, nearer to Thyself, and may the gracious influences of Thy Divine Spirit work upon all our hearts now, and bring us into true fellowship with Thee.

We bless Thee for a renewed opportunity of uniting with one another in calling upon Thee, and we thank Thee for all the strength which in time past has been given to Thy people when they have made supplication in Thy Name. May we each of us bring Christ with us into our gathering. We do bring weakness and coldness, and our presence will chill rather than warm our brethren's hearts. But we beseech Thee that Thou wouldst be near us all, and breathe Thy grace upon each of us. Help us now to realise to Whom we speak, and through Whom we speak, and who we are that speak, that our petitions may be in accordance with Thy holy will, and in some measure in accordance with the greatness of our necessities, and the still greater greatness of Thy gifts.

O Lord! when we begin to think of what we need, we know not which to speak to Thee of first; but we bless Thee that all is gathered together in one; that we do not need many things, but the one thing. We pray Thee that more and more Thy love may root itself in our hearts, that more and more we may live by the power of the Christ that lives in us, that more

and more we may be able to subdue wandering and rebellious wills, and more and more receive into waiting and wide-opened hearts the fullness of God, and then all things will be well with us.

Strengthen us by Thy all-powerful and all-victorious grace for all our work, for all our difficulties, for all our sorrows and trials. Help us in everything to recognise Thy presence and Thy hand, and to set ourselves to our various occupations, feeling that in them all we may worship, and that in them all we have a right to expect Thy presence and Thy help. And do Thou clear our eyesight that we may behold the things that are not yet as though they were; and may find in the future, which is made sure to all believing souls by the Resurrection of Jesus Christ and His sitting at Thy right hand, the great recompense of reward, the lustre and light of which shall shine down upon our earthly paths, and make all things blessed and easy for us. Abide with us day by day, teach us Thy holy will in each new circumstance that meets us. Guide us by Thy counsel in everything large and little which we have to undertake, to reflect upon, and to decide about. And give us, we pray Thee, grace with which to recognise Thy will and submit to it, and try to carry out Thy will. Help us to conquer the evil in ourselves, any inclination or habits contrary to Thy holy purpose concerning us, even our sanctification. And strengthen us, we pray Thee, for the daily conflict. May the peace of God be in our hearts in the midst of it, and make us more than conquerors through Christ that loveth us.

We beseech Thee to give us Thy blessing now, and some word which shall be in accordance with Thy holy will, and be of use to us in our daily life and

Christian experience. We thank Thee for all the times when we have found Thee when we sought Thee thus. We bless Thee for past days of mercy and goodness granted to this people. We praise Thee that Thou art still with us, and beseech Thee not to leave us nor forsake us, but make this congregation more and more a power for God in this city; and make each of us more and more worthy to be, and to call ourselves, disciples of Jesus Christ. May men take knowledge of us that we have been with Jesus. Give us Thy presence now, we pray; let the word of the Lord run and be glorified. We commend one another to Thy gracious care; we pray for all, present or absent, who may be in our hearts, especially for any that are in any kind of trouble or sorrow, and beseech Thee that Thou wouldst succour and sustain Thy children; when Thou dost send Thy strokes send also Thy solace, and grant that all Thy people may, being exercised by Thy discipline, reap hereafter 'the peaceable fruit of righteousness.'

Accept us as we come to Thee now, O Lord! Speak in us, speak through us, speak to us. May we have the hearing ear, and the understanding heart, and the obedient hand, for the sake of Jesus Christ our Lord and Saviour.

LXXIX

O LORD, our gracious Father, we thank Thee for that 'faithful saying . . . that Jesus Christ is come into the world to save sinners.' And we beseech Thee that Thou wouldst show forth Thy longsuffering in us, and draw us to Thyself more and more, that we may partake more freely of that perfect salvation which is in Him. We bless Thee that whilst we have to lift up

our hearts and thoughts to Thee as the King eternal, immortal and invisible, we can draw far nearer to Thyself when we think of Thee as the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ; and when we feel that in the salvation of us sinners Thou hast manifested Thyself more tenderly and more blessedly than in all the mighty works of Thy hands. We come to Thee then, and beseech Thee that Thou wouldst help each of us to accept that 'saying' which 'is worthy of all acceptance'; and in the strength of it may we daily live, and in the joy and peace of it may we more and more rise to the end of all Thy mercies, as well as of Thy commandments, which is love, out of a good conscience and a pure heart, which come through faith unfeigned. Oh, deepen and strengthen in us our confidence in that great Lord, and in the might of His work for us. And may we experience more and more the power of His salvation, so that it may be not only a matter of faith but a matter of daily experience.

Help us, we beseech Thee, day by day, to 'cleanse ourselves from all filthiness of the flesh and spirit, perfecting holiness in the fear of the Lord.' Help us daily to govern ourselves, our own tastes and inclinations, and to submit our purposes and thoughts, and all our plans and works, habitually to Thee, that we may have this approval consciously in our hearts ere we undertake, and Thy felt presence with us while we prosecute, the various duties and occupations of our daily lives.

We thank Thee, O Lord, that Thou art ever ready to stand by them that stand by Thee, and to be a fellow-worker with those whose deepest desire is to work the work of the Lord. May we realise more the greatness of the dignity to which Thou dost lift even such poor

creatures as we are, in making us fellow-workers with the Truth; and that Thou wouldst more and more come into our lives and cause us to feel that God is of a truth 'working in us both to will and to do, according to His own good pleasure.' Thou knowest our weakness, the weakness which belongs to us by reason of being creatures such as we are, and that greater weakness which belongs to us by reason of having rebelled against Thee. We pray that in Thy great mercy Thou wouldst take out of our hearts all alien and sinful desires, inclinations, and tastes. We pray Thee to strengthen our feeble hands for warfare against our own besetting sins. We beseech Thee for grace to 'lay aside every weight' as well as every sin, that we may, unhampered and unhindered, run with patient perseverance the race that Thou, in Thy mercy, dost set before us.

We pray for forgiveness for all past failures, that we may make the future brighter and nobler than the past has been. We beseech Thee that we may have the consciousness of Thy Holy Spirit's presence in heart and mind, and that men may see in our lives that we are guided and governed by something higher and nobler than men in the world.

Graciously do Thou bless our gathering together at all times, and especially now as we are here before Thee. We thank Thee for the opportunity of approaching Thy Throne together. We bless Thee for all the quickening which sluggish faith has received, and for all the impulse which has been given to holier living by our gathering together in times that are past. We pray that Thou wouldst be with us still; and help us in Thy great mercy that we may, at all times, when we assemble thus, have Thy presence manifestly

with us; and that we ourselves may feel that the Lord our God is speaking to us, and is hearing the prayers which Himself hath taught.

We pray for one another, for all that are dear to us, present or absent, for all the families represented here, for any in sorrow or trouble. And we beseech Thee that where Thou dost send Thy providences to shroud homes and hearts in darkness Thou wouldst send the light of Thy face, and the consciousness of Thy presence. And may all Thy people hear, in their varying sorrows, the voice of their Father inviting them nearer to Himself.

And now we pray Thee to bless us in this hour of worship, speak through us and to us, and help us to accept Thy message, and to live according to Thy will in the time that is yet to come. Hear our supplications, O Lord! pardon our many sins; quicken and help us now, through Jesus Christ our Lord and Saviour.

LXXX

✓ O LORD, Who hast been the dwelling-place of Thy people in all generations, and art still our strong habitation whereunto we may continually resort, we would draw near to Thee now, and remember with thankfulness and submission all the way by which the Lord our God has led us. We partly understand Thy loving meaning in our lives, and we pray for a clearer vision, and a more settled faith, that observing these things we may in them all perceive the loving-kindness of the Lord.

We would come to Thee this morning, O Father, and in the exercise of the faith would bring Thee our thankfulness, and beseech Thee to deepen in our

hearts and minds the quiet confidence that all things work together for good to us if we love Thee. Thou dost weave the mingled web of our lives. We would believe that Thy goodness has put every thread into it. We bless Thee for guidance, for protection, for abundant mercies, often received without recognition of their Source, and used without remembrance of our responsibility, and dismissed without the memory of their sweetness. But we thank Thee for all things, and pray that Thou wouldst come near to us in and through Thy varying gifts and dealings, so that all things may be good because they whisper to us of Thyself.

We would cast ourselves on Thee, O Lord, for all the time to come, be it long or short, of our pilgrimage here. We thank Thee that we do not need to be sad when we remember that we are as pilgrims and sojourners, because we can say that we are pilgrims and sojourners with Thee, and dwell in Thy house, if we will, all the days of our lives. May the assurance of Thy presence go with us, and give us the rest which nothing else can give. May the sense that God is not far from every one of us be a perpetual light, and the lamp of our lives, giving guidance, companionship, and good cheer at all times.

Help us to make the most of our time, of ourselves, and of all Thy gifts to us; and may we be more concerned to grow what Thou wouldst have us to be, and to do with an increasing promptitude and cheerfulness whatsoever Thou wouldst have us to do, than to win earthly joys, or to secure our transitory wishes.

We pray Thee to guide us by Thy counsel. We thank Thee that we can leave to-morrow, the next moment, and the Eternity beyond, alike in Thine hands. Since

we must trust Thee for even the nearest future may we trust Thee for the greatest and remotest. And since Thou hast replenished all our past so wisely and abundantly, may our faith never fail, but in quietness and in confidence may our strength be found; and may we be anxious about nothing, because everything we commit, by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving, unto Thy loving, mighty, wise hands.

Hear us, O Lord; grant to us individually and as a congregation of professing disciples in Christ Jesus Thy blessing in this year. We know not what shape the blessing may take. We ask Thee for help to conquer our sins and faults; for increasing knowledge and delight in Thy holy will. We ask Thee to give us such outward gifts as Thou knowest to be for our good, and help us to subdue our limit and wishes according to Thy providence, and neither to be encumbered with regrets for what Thou hast taken, nor tortured with anxiety as to what thou mayest give.

O Lord! pour out upon this Church and congregation a larger measure of Thy Holy Spirit. Help us, rather, that we may more completely make our own that which Thou hast given us, for we are not straitened in Thee but in ourselves. Help us more and more to derive the impulse for our lives, the pattern for our lives, and the power to reproduce that pattern according as Thine own gracious promise has told us, that we may be filled with all the fullness of God. O Lord, mercifully hear us, forgive, accept, and bless us, for Jesus Christ's sake.

LXXXI

O LORD, our gracious Father, Who art ever near us, ready to teach us what to pray for, and ready to answer the petitions in accordance with Thy holy will, help us to make our prayers not only askings but longings. And when we draw near to Thee may we not only be conscious of our own wants, but sure of Thy fullness and sufficiency and sweetness.

We thank Thee that we can think of nothing that we need which Thou dost not know, and art not ready to give us. Wherefore we pray Thee that our prayers may be full of faith, and full of willingness to accept what Thou dost send. Thou knowest each of us here before Thee this morning, and all the variety of our wants and circumstances, of our present experiences, and our purposes and hopes. We pray that Thou wouldst come near to each of us, and whatever other gifts thou mayest bestow upon us, according to our special necessities, give us, O Lord, and help us to long most for, and most gladly to accept, that gift which is best for all of us, the gift of Thy own self. Canst Thou not be to every man the thing that he desires most truly, the thing that he needs most profoundly?

We bless Thee for the infinite variety of Thy gifts, and of Thyself. Thou art all in all. May we find our all in Thee. If any have special burdens of sorrow do Thou graciously speak to sad hearts, and grant that the light of Thy presence may shine into all the darkness, and that we may not be sorry for the darkness which brings out the brightness of Thy face. If any of us have special duties to discharge which our circumstances make us to feel very heavy, be near to such, we pray, and give Thy power according to their

need, and the strength of the Most High perfected in their weakness. Help those who are in slippery places to stand fast in the Lord; looking forward may we be at peace, looking backward may we be grateful, looking inwards may we be humble, looking upwards may we be confident.

O Lord! we pray for all our brethren throughout the world, and beseech Thee that this year on which we have entered may be a year in which the churches of the living God may be drawn nearer to their Lord, may be filled fuller of His Spirit, and may be made mightier witnesses for Him in the world.

Hear us now; grant us Thy blessing. Let us speak some word in Thy Name; take away all our unfitness in hearing and in speaking, and shed abroad Thy grace upon our hearts, for Christ our Saviour's sake.

LXXXII

O LORD, Love eternal, Truth immovable, Power unwearied, Our Father which art in Heaven, draw our hearts to Thyself, we beseech Thee, and grant that we may each of us now feel that we are indeed speaking to One that hears, pities, and will help. Surely we need Thy help, and great and infinite as Thou art Thou art not more than we require for our hearts' peace, for our lives' nobleness and serenity.

O Lord, may each of us desire, and desiring possess, God. Whatever else life may bring us or take from us, may it bring us that which nothing but ourselves can rob us of, the eager consciousness of Thy present help, and of Thy all-sufficiency. Be near us now, we beseech Thee; bless us in our worship this evening; guide the heart and thoughts of the speaker and of the hearers;

and may the grace of the Lord Jesus Christ be made very real, and very precious to each of us by reason of this service. Hear us, O Lord, in our petitions; grant us Thy presence as we worship here, and accept us, in Christ our Lord.

LXXXIII

O LORD our God, we would thank Thee for Thy countless gifts of love, and beseech Thee that we may connect more constantly all our good with Thyself, the Chief Good. Surely 'every good and perfect gift cometh from Thee,' and all the lesser lights are kindled at Thy beam. We bless Thee for the manifold ways in which Thou dost impart Thyself to every portion of our nature and our need. And we pray Thee that Thy lesser gifts may help us to understand and possess Thy greater ones, and that none of us may be like the creatures who know not the hand that feeds them; but may we ever find, and find increasingly, that Thy presence in our joys is the gladness of our joys, and that Thy presence in our tasks makes our burdens light, and Thy presence in our sorrows brings a glow even into the darkness.

O Lord! look upon us and graciously help us in our words and meditations, that Thy truth may run amongst us and be glorified, and that many gathered here this evening may by reason of this gathering be brought face to face with Thyself, and led to yield their hearts to Thee.

We pray for all assembled here, especially for the younger portion of our congregation, and ask that each of them may be led, from this time forth, to say, 'My Father, Thou art the Guide of my youth.' Keep

any that are in slippery places. Look upon the young men here, who, perchance, far from earlier associations, and the security of being known and surrounded by those that love them, may be in danger of falling into the temptations of the world, the flesh, and the devil, which are rife in this great city. In their solitude may they have Thyself, and may they keep themselves pure, and innocent from the great transgression. In the early flush of their days may they consecrate their youth to Jesus Christ, and find in Him all that youth or age can ever need. And if it please Thee, O Lord, give us some message this evening that may be felt to come from Thyself, and grant that Thy good Spirit may go with Thy word, and write it deep on the hearts and consciences of all of us.

O Lord! help us each according to our different duties, difficulties, and circumstances. Strengthen and give patience to those in sorrow. If any of us are in anxiety, or nourishing forebodings of coming possible evil, help us to cast our burden on the Lord, and seek not to be anxious about anything; but 'in everything, by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving, make our requests known unto Thee,' that Thy peace may steal into our hearts. Whatever may be our present condition, help us to use it as Thou dost mean it, to bring us nearer to Thyself, to build up within us Christ-like and Christ-pleasing characters. And may we so use the things seen and temporal that they may make more clear and firm to us our possession of 'the things that are unseen and eternal.'

Hear, accept, and bless us now, through Jesus Christ our Lord and Saviour.

LXXXIV

O LORD our Father, Who dwellest in Thine eternal rest, we thank Thee that there is a Sabbath-keeping for the people of God. We beseech Thee that Thou wouldst come into our hearts this morning, calming all disturbance, dissipating fears, brightening the darkness of sorrow, and helping us to cast all our care upon Thee, that we may know the rest of submission, and the peace that passeth all understanding, of communion with Thee. Teach all our hearts, we beseech Thee; draw near to each of us, and may we all find that of a truth it is no vain thing to wait upon the Lord! Hear us, grant us Thy presence and blessing now, for our risen Lord's sake.

LXXXV

THANKFULLY, O Lord, we draw near to Thee, for surely the closer we are to Thee the sweeter and the nobler our lives, and the more blessed our hearts, and the stronger we are to do and to bear Thy will. We need Thy pardon because, though we know all this, we so often forget it, and stray away from the guardianship of Thine hand, and from the sweet security of Thy presence, in the midst of the struggles and legitimate objects of our daily work. So we thank Thee that Thou hast had pity upon our weakness, and given us the public ordinances of this day wherein even sense may help the spirit, and we may come the closer to Thee because of our surroundings and our associates.

O shed abroad upon us Thy gracious influences, without which these very helps of Thine appointing will, by our weakness, become hindrances. May we pass through the forms into the realities, and may this be a

true hour of worship for each of us, wherein we may see clearly what is so often wrapped in mist and darkness; and what we so often do not care to look at, though it shines around us. May we feel that we are very near to God Who is our life. May we learn all the sweetness and the power in that Name, 'Our Father in Heaven.' And may we come like children, glad to be beside Thee, and having rest in Thy presence even though no word pass.

O Lord, how manifold are Thy mercies. Thy loving-kindnesses close us round day by day, and moment by moment. Thy punctual goodness brings us not only each day our daily bread, but each instant our needed blessings. We beseech Thee to make us more observant of these things that we may understand the loving-kindness of the Lord. And we beseech Thee to help us in the strength of the assurance that we are Thy beloved children, to pass on through all our days, and have them brightened by the light of Thy face and the love of Thy heart.

O Lord! receive our gratitude for any special blessings which any of us may, during these past days, have had from Thine hand. If Thou hast heard any of our prayers, if Thou hast answered not by terrible things in righteousness but by gracious things in love, we would praise Thee, and beseech Thee that Thy mercies, like Thine afflictions, may not be wasted upon us. And we pray Thee for Thy help to go with us through all the variety of our circumstances and duties. Thou knowest what may press most upon each of us here to-day. The heart knoweth its own bitterness; blessed be Thy Name. Thou art not a stranger who cannot intermeddle with its joy and its grief alike. So we would spread out our words and our lives before Thee, O

Lord! and implore, as the greatest of all our blessings, that Thou wouldst lighten and fill every corner of our being with Thyself.

Thou hast put a great prayer into our lips when Thou hast led and bidden us ask that we may 'be filled with all the fullness of God.' And we pray that it may be so with us. O Lord! help us, day by day, in our tasks. May we do them for Thee, and by Thee, and in fellowship with Thee. And so may all the things that are seen and temporal help us to a clearer perception, and a more entire possession even here and now, of 'the things that are unseen and eternal.' For us too may all the diversities of our life's engagements be summed up in doing this one thing, 'pressing toward the mark for the prize.' May we look up to Thee this morning in our meetings, and pray that Thou wouldst help us, not only in our words to Thee, but in our words to one another.

O Lord! give us, we pray Thee, some message from Thyself that shall have the demonstration of the Spirit's power in it, and shall find a witness in the hearts of all that hear. And do Thou help hearers and speaker alike to forget the human element, to look to God and to listen to Him. And grant, we beseech Thee, that this morning, by our service, faint hearts may be strengthened, and wandering souls be brought back, and the Kingdom of Jesus be advanced in our hearts. May such blessings rest upon this congregation, upon Thy dear servant its pastor; and may like mercies be granted to all our brethren, of every communion and name in our city. We pray that the people of the Lord in this place may more and more be conscious of the responsibilities and privileges to be witnesses for Christ here; and that in their lives and in their work, in their

words from pulpits, and schools, and places of instruction, and by their efforts as citizens of no mean city, and the members of this mighty nation, that the righteousness which exalteth a community may spread among us.

We desire to commend very tenderly to Thee any that are in sorrow or trouble; and beseech Thee to draw near to darkened homes, to empty hearts, and to pour Thy grace, and the consolations which are neither few nor small into such.

And now we commend ourselves to Thee. We beseech Thee to hear and answer and forgive all our sins, and accept us through Jesus Christ our Saviour.

LXXXVI

O LORD, our gracious God! Thou art indeed our rest, and we would call upon our souls and all that is within us to return unto Thee, for surely Thou dost draw us to Thyself by Thy bountiful dealings with us; and we, too, have to lift up our thankful voices, and say that Thou hast delivered our souls from death, hast often kept our eyes from tears, and hast always been waiting and wishing to keep our feet from falling. So we pray that we indeed may walk before the Lord in the land of the living, in the land where Thou dost still permit us to stay. And may we be of those who live indeed because the life of God is in us. And may we be of those who render unto Thee that which Thou dost most desire when we take the cup of salvation, the many blessings which Thou dost bestow upon us, and most chiefly that highest of all, the gift of Thyself, Who art our life and our salvation, and taking these benefits, call upon Thy Name.

Help us to come into that large place where we know that we draw near to Thee, to honour Thee most, not by rendering but by receiving. And do Thou help us to realise in our own hearts, and daily lives, the blessedness of those who are continually drawing from the one fountain of life, and so are perpetually satisfied.

We come to Thee, O Lord! with our thanksgivings for all the way by which Thou hast led us. We sometimes murmur, we sometimes think that we could have ordered our lives better than Thou hast done. We sometimes kick against the pricks, and wound ourselves; but we pray Thee to bring us up, and to keep us in that high region of fellowship and love wherein all things shall be seen to be full of blessings, and felt to be working together for good. So we would leave out nothing, O Lord, in our thanksgiving, and pray Thee for grace, honestly and entirely, to take upon our lips the acknowledgment and in our hearts the sense of Thy unbroken unmingled goodness. May we feel that every gift is good and perfect since in all there is something of the light of the Father of Lights from Whom they all come. Blessed be Thy Name! Thou hast no variableness. Thou dost not live *sometimes*, and do good by fits and starts.

We thank Thee for the equable and continual flow of Thy mercy, which endureth for ever through all the variety of Thy dealings with us day by day, and stretches out into the dimmest distance. Lord! be near us, we beseech Thee, in our worship; accept our thanks when Thou hast gathered us together this morning. We bless Thee for all the associations of this day and place; most of all we bless Thee for the hallowing memory of that great Day of the Lord when Christ rose from the dead. And we beseech Thee that we too, here and now,

may be partakers of His Resurrection, and may rise again from the death of sin and live unto righteousness and God.

Speak in our hearts, O Lord! that we may speak to Thee, for our prayers are then only sweet when Thou dost inspire them. And we pray that our hearts may be visited, that we may feel that we are being visited by Thy supernal grace which may find its way into all our minds, and bring strange flashes of light, and a strange sense of restful blessedness and willingness to be merged in Thy will.

O Lord! forgive our past sins; help us to make the future better and brighter than what lies behind. May we be reaching forth to the things that are before, and live with the joyous and buoyant energy of a continual aspiration towards, and realisation of, unattained yet unattainable heights, of likeness to Thyself, of possession of Thyself, and of blessedness in Thyself. We pray Thee to hear us, to forgive all our sins, and in Thy great mercy to accept and bless us now, through Jesus Christ our Lord and Saviour.

LXXXVII

O LORD our God! help us, we beseech Thee, that something of that triumphant persuasion may pass into and abide in our hearts and minds. May we feel the bonds that knit us to Thee, the sweet and immortal bonds, not of our love to Thee, but of Thy love flowing out to us, and grasping us. May we never, we who only can, may we never break these bonds, or separate ourselves from the love of God which is in Jesus Christ our Lord.

Help us, day by day, to tighten the bond, to yield

ourselves more to Thy stringent embrace. Help us to live in the fuller possession, and the more joyful response of, and to, Thy great love to us; and may that love, dwelling in our hearts, work there all things lovely and of good report. Lift us up above our own weaknesses and meannesses. Breathe strength into us that shall be made perfect in our weakness. Make us lords of our selves and circumstances and times. May we live as the sons of God, without rebuke. May we have in our hearts the consciousness that Thou art with us. May the voice of our deepest spirits be 'Abba! Father!' May we be saved by hope.

Guide us, O Lord, day by day, according to all the diversity of our characters and necessities. Thou appointest a path for us; we would not hew it out for ourselves, but ask Thee to lead us with that 'kindly light' which Thou dost grant to them that keep the single eye. We pray that we may not be left in perplexity as to what the will of the Lord is. And may we be always equally ready to ascertain and to obey.

We pray for Thy help in our various occupations, and all the callings which Thou hast laid upon us. May we realise that they are callings from God, summonses to His service, invitations to come up higher, though we so often make them excuses for tarrying down below. We beseech Thee to deliver us from the temptations of our callings, from the snares of our duties, and from all which our own weakness turns into occasions of stumbling when Thou dost mean them to be means of rising to Thyself. Help us to live to Thy praise; give us Thy presence in our hour of worship; speak in our hearts and to each of us, and strengthen us to accept and to obey the message which Thou dost give us.

Now, O Lord! take us into Thy care; forgive our many sins; and grant us Thy gracious help and presence this morning, for our Saviour Jesus Christ's sake.

LXXXVIII

O LORD! Who hast taught us to think of Thee as our help and our shield, strengthen us now that our hearts may indeed wait upon Thee, and in still dependence may draw from Thee rich blessing suited to the several conditions of each of us. We thank Thee for that great fullness to our emptiness. We pray that we may not hinder, by anything in us, the communication of Thy grace and strength. May our hearts lie open to the sunshine, and ever be turned to the noontide, that into our souls there may pass all that we need of Thy grace, strength, wisdom, purity, and blessedness.

We acknowledge before Thee, O Lord! that we have not held our hearts quiet that Thy grace may flow into them, and since the cup has been unsteadily held much of the precious gift has been spilt. We pray that we may, in time to come, ask nothing doubting, and so receive of the Lord. May we not contradict and neutralise the desires that we sometimes have, and put into prayer, by the daily life which makes it impossible for Thee to answer the supplications we present.

Help us to bind ourselves to Thee by the strong curbs which Thou dost supply to us. May we, in simplicity and continuity of dependence, walk through life before God, with God, and draw from Thee whatever we need. We thank Thee for the helps to such daily living which this day has often given us in the past. We thank

Thee for any illumination or impulse to holier and better things of which we have sometimes been conscious when we have gathered together here; for the many hours in past days and years of communion with Thyself, and with one another, which Thou hast granted to us. And we pray that to-day we may all be helped, and all be brought into contact with that great truth, and that great Lord of truth, by Whom our falsities may be scattered, and Who, dwelling in our hearts, makes life and peace there.

May Jesus Christ, the 'Conqueror renowned,' abide in our souls increasingly, conquer all our evil, scatter our vanities, and shine in us with His own truth. And help us in our worship to lift up our hearts to Thee, and pass beyond the mere forms into the reality of communion with God. We bring to Thee very much weakness; may we know it more. We bring to Thee many sins, many tendencies to evil, much that is averse to God, and too indolent to lay hold, and keep hold, of the things that belong to our peace. We pray that the sluggishness of our spirits, and the wanderings of our desires, and the feebleness of our wills, and the strength of the distractions that tear us away from Thee, or try to do it, may all be taken in hand and cured and helped by Thy good Spirit that the life of Jesus Christ in us may make us free from the law of sin and death.

Lord! look upon us coming with many thanksgivings, with lowly petitions, and with faith that does reach out to Thee, however tremulously, and grant large blessings which shall make us ashamed of our small desires. Let Thy mercy be upon us, not 'according as,' but *since* 'our trust is in Thee,' however imperfect that trust may be.

Hear us; grant Thy gracious presence and all-sufficient help, for our Lord Christ's sake.

LXXXIX

O LORD! help us to come before Thee, heartened by that prayer which we have been reading, to ask of Thee great things, and expect the answer. May we indeed have the eyes of our understandings enlightened, and by our own blessed experience know the greatness of that power with which Thou workest in the hearts of them that trust Thee. May we ever be aware of that Spirit of Thine, bearing witness for our spirits, and by the purifying and the perfecting, enlarging and elevating which this trust brings with it. May we know that we are the children of God.

We pray for Thy gracious help in our service of this morning. We humbly cast ourselves upon Thee, and pray that Thy spirit may help the infirmity of hearers and speaker, that we may hear what God the Lord shall speak, whether it be our office in this service to utter what Thou dost whisper in our ear, or to receive what comes from human lips. Give Thy servants grace to discern between what is human and may mar and weaken Thy message, and the omnipotence of that message. Help us to pass beyond external and human infirmities, and to be taught of God. May our lives increasingly bear, to ourselves as to others, the tokens of Thine influence. Breathe upon us, and may we daily take up the burdens which thou dost lay on us; and walk in cheerful godliness, accepting humblest duties, and not shrinking from the hardest.

Help us to fight the good fight, to wrestle with the temptations around us, and the base tendencies of a

compliance within. May we learn more and more of the weaknesses of our own characters against which we have to be on our guard. And may we be strengthened to keep our hearts with all diligence, and to watch ever the sort of life that issues from them.

We pray Thee to give us grace to war against special temptations. Thou knowest how often our best resolutions break down and crumble to nothing before the fires of temptation. We beseech Thee to strengthen that which is weak, to establish the feet that are ready to slide, to give us that power which shall make us more than conquerors through Him that loves us.

And now we would commend one another, and all our brethren, to Thee, with especially tender remembrance of, and supplications for, all such as are in any way afflicted. Some such there must be here this morning. Let Thy peace, which passes all understanding, calm their hearts, and prepare the way, in due time, for the saving and uplifting joy of the Lord which may exist even with the sadness from the world.

We pray Thee to take us all into Thy care now; in Thy mercy help and bless us in our service; and when we need Thy help, at all moments, and never more than when we would stir ourselves up to take hold of Thee, and of Thy truth, and of Thy Son.

Hear us then, we pray; accept and bless us now, for our Lord Jesus Christ's sake.

XC

O LORD! Whose Name alone is exalted, Whose glory is above the praises of earth and Heaven, we come to

Thee with thankful hearts, and desire to bless Thee that we have access with confidence to Thee, and can lose all our fears and dread, and face the sense of our own unworthiness and weakness without fear when we think of Thee, of Thine infinite heart of love, and of all that Thou hast said to us by Thy mighty works which are Thy Word, and by Him Who is Thy Word concerning Thy loving heart, Thy pardoning grace, Thy cleansing power. May we lose ourselves in Thee, to find ourselves hallowed and ennobled and blessed.

We would come to Thee to praise Thee for whatever sadness may mingle in our praise. We beseech Thee that Thou wouldst help us neither to think of ourselves and our unworthiness so as to forget Thine overabundant love, nor to think of the darkness and the sorrows of our own and of other lives so as to lose the peaceful faith that all which we behold is full of blessing.

We pray Thee to help us to come very near to Thyself, in lowly communion, and the reaching out of our souls towards Thee this morning, that we may rise above the ordinary things of this life and make them the means of getting nearer Thyself and climbing into Thy presence. We thank Thee that we do not need so much to climb as to let Thee lift us. And we pray that we may not resist the great Voice that is ever saying to us 'Come up higher,' or the great Power that is ever seeking to raise us from our low estate.

We bless Thee for all the quickening, elevating influences of Thy holy Word, and of Thy mighty Spirit; and we thank Thee that to-day, and at this hour, even outward things do lose their frequent antagonism to the best in ourselves, and do help us instead of hindering us in our approach to Thee.

We bless Thee, for we are weak, for the external aids to inward communion; we thank Thee for the associations of this day, for the memories which many of us have, through long years, of this place, and for all the blessings received in such services as these. We thank Thee for the return of this day of rest. We pray that it may be to us a day of the true rest, rest in God-fearing service. And we beseech Thee that Thou wouldst help us, as we come near to Thee this morning, to open our hearts to the full radiance of Thy Son, and to give ourselves without reserve to the sacred influences and the sanctifying influences of this place and hour.

And, O Lord, we would come to Thee, drawn by Thy great mercy, and impelled, too, by our sense of need. We look back on the past, and we see that its one failure has been that we have wandered from Thee, and have had so little of Thy life in our lives. Clothe us, we beseech Thee, with all the grace and glory which Thou hast to bestow upon waiting souls. Make us wise, make us Christlike. May we manifest that we are His in our daily lives, and may all the little things that make up so much of our lives be made great because we connect them with Him and with Thee, and with that solemn Eternity which lies beyond, and yet so near.

Help us to live in the light of Thy face, strong to do, patient to bear, whatever Thou dost command and appoint, and wise to see the motions of Thy hand and the hints of Thy will which Thou dost give us in our daily experience, and which we so often pass unobserved. We pray Thee to forgive all that has been contrary to Thy supreme purpose concerning us. We pray Thee to help us in what may yet remain to us of

our probation and apprenticeship period here on earth, to grow in the grace and knowledge of our Lord and Saviour, and to become more and more what Thou dost desire us to be, and what Thou hast made it possible for us to be by Thy great gift of Thy Son and His Spirit to us.

Forgive all that has been wrong, strengthen all that is right, bring us nearer to Thyself, and may we habitually live in the secret place of the Most High. Hear us in these our prayers, we beseech Thee; in Thy great mercy answer; Thou surely hast taught us to desire, and Thou surely wilt not refrain from satisfying the desires which Thou dost inspire; may we be a people near unto Thee, and being near Thee grow like Thee. Hear us in our prayer, in Thy mercy forgive and answer us, through Jesus Christ our Saviour-Lord.

XCI

O LORD! help each of us to say 'My God!' and may we trust in Thee peacefully to supply all our need 'according to Thy riches in glory in Christ Jesus.' We thank Thee for the confidence which Thou dost permit us to cherish that our heavenly Father knoweth what things we have need of before we ask Him. And we thank Thee that Thou dost let us ask Thee, and that when we mistake stones for bread, and sometimes desire them, or poisonous for nutritious food, Thou knowest better, and art wont to give us, even in disappointing us, the bread that we seek really, though we do not ask it knowingly.

We thank Thee for all the wisdom of Thy providence; we thank Thee for disappointed hopes, for fulfilled desires. And in the disappointments and the fulfilment

we pray for grace to see the same loving wisdom of the Father Who knoweth how to give good things to His children. Help us, we pray Thee, in this confidence to live and work; help us to cast all our cares and burdens, perplexities and sorrows, wishes and purposes, upon Thyself, and to realise that perfect peace which comes from unbroken communion with our Father-God.

O Lord! be near us as we are gathered here together, and help us in our meditations and in our word, that the great glory of Thy great word may not be dimmed by passing through human lips, but that the message from Thyself may be clear, and may be received by us, whatever may befall the message through men in which we hope it is wrapped.

O Lord! strengthen us to hear and to speak and to obey. Guide us each by Thy counsel, comfort any of us that are in any kind of sorrow, perplexity, or trouble. Be near all sad and solitary souls. And if the weight and burden of this weary world is pressing heavily upon any of us may we be aware of a mightier power upholding us, and may we be able to do and to endure all things through Christ that strengtheneth us within.

We pray Thee to hear us, to grant us Thy gracious help and presence in our worship, and to accept us as we come through Christ our Saviour.

XCII

O LORD, Who art the God of our salvation, we thank Thee that a man may be called the Friend of God. We beseech Thee to help us to make that name ours as it was Thy servants' of old. When we were enemies we

were reconciled to God by the death of His Son, much more being friends we shall be saved by His light. Help us, drawing near to Thee now, to come with loving hearts, with frank confidence. May there be no dread of Thee in any corner of our thoughts or feelings. May there be reverence for Him throughout our whole being. We bless Thee that the High and the lowly, God and we, can come together. Thou art our Friend; we are Thine. The Lord shall be to us a God, and we will be to Him a people. May we possess Thee and be possessed by Thee, and so possess ourselves.

We thank Thee, O Lord, that we can come to Thee with such peaceful confidence and quiet hearts; and we beseech Thee to help us to pass beyond all thoughts of ourselves, and to enter into the great liberty and blessedness of losing ourselves in Thee. Not by the works of righteousness which we have done, but by Thy mercy, Thou hast saved us. And we come content and thankful to owe everything to Thy gracious heart, and pray Thee that Thou wouldst give us what we can never earn, the light that never dies. Cleanse us from all our death in life, from all our separation from Thee, in will and thought and deed. May we more and more have Thee with us in our work, and in us in our spirits. May we live the lives that we live in the flesh by the faith of the Son of God Who loved us. May we walk not only before Thee, as ever in our great Taskmaster's eye, but as companioned by our heavenly Friend. And may we walk after Thee, as directed by our heavenly Guide.

We beseech Thee to accept us as we bring our supplications now, and to help us to remember all the reasons which this day preaches to us for thankfulness

and confidence. We praise Thee for a risen Christ, our Brother and our Forerunner, Who is even at the right hand of God, and has gone in to prepare a place for us. We thank Thee for our Advocate before the Throne; that our cause is wrapped up in Christ's, and that it cannot be that the Head and the members can be parted in destiny and blessedness.

Thou hast often drawn near to us and spoken to our hearts in past times in our worship here. So we pray Thee that it may be again; that our weakness may be strengthened and our sadness lifted up and changed into joy in the Lord, and all our waywardness corrected, and our wills subdued, and our whole nature bettered and quickened and made more Christlike and more God-pleasing by our service this morning. Accept our thanks for every mercy Thou hast bestowed upon us, and be near us still, for our hope is in Thee. And we bring to Thee empty hearts and hands to be filled with Thy blessings, and many demerits to be forgiven by Thy love.

Hear us, we beseech Thee; accept and answer us now, for our Lord Christ's sake.

XCIII

O LORD, our God, we thank Thee that we have learnt not to think that the visitation of God means judgment and sorrow. These are Thy strange work, but Thou delightest when Thou canst come to us; in Thy coming be as the morning which breaks upon a dark world.

We thank Thee for such visitations and drawings near of Thy sweet power and of Thy strong mercy. We thank Thee for life breathed into death, for healing

from the lip of the Life and the Healer. We thank Thee for all the great gifts which flow to us through Jesus Christ; and since Thou hast lavished so much upon us we beseech Thee that Thy mercy may not be for any of us as waters spilt upon the ground which cannot be gathered up. May our cup be ever held forth to receive the showers of blessings. May our hearts never be closed to Thine open heart, nor our hands held back when Thy hand is stretched forth. We feel that Thy giving is perfect; alas! for our receiving. And we pray Thee to forgive, and to make us capable of larger gifts of Thine. And may we indeed open our mouths wide that Thou mayest fill them. Enlarge our desires, we beseech Thee, and our expectations and our faith, for Thou art able to give us 'exceeding abundantly above all that we can ask or think.'

Forgive us, then, if we have been starving in the midst of plenty; poor when Thy riches are held forth to us, or lacking anything when we have a God to go to that gives liberally. Make us more and more faithful in our use of Thy benefits, for surely 'to him that hath shall be given.' And strengthen us to use all which Thou dost bestow upon us, whether in the way of natural capacity or providences, bright or dark, sorrowful or joyful, for opportunities of any kind to make ourselves and others better and more like Thee. Help us to use them all as stewards, and so to enter upon the fuller possession of them as sons.

Bless each of us here before Thee, Lord! Thou knowest our necessities, our circumstances, our tasks, our temptations, our weaknesses of nature and the greater weaknesses that our own bad guiding of ourselves has brought us into. Shape Thou Thy gifts

according to our needs, we beseech Thee; and since we all need Thee, and each need Thee, in a separate way, we pray Thee that the one inexhaustible benefit may come to each of us in the shape which we most require. And so 'give us this day our daily bread.'

We beseech Thee to comfort and succour any of us that are in sorrow, to draw near to any that are burdened in heart, to shed light upon any whose paths may be dark and perplexing, to deliver us from errors of thought and from faults of practice; and to keep us in all changing circumstances, in the perfect peace of those who have yielded their wills to Thee.

We beseech Thee for Thy help when we try to speak a word in Thy Name. Thou knowest the weakness of hearers and of speaker, and the many things which come in to distract and disturb and weaken our thoughts and Thy Word; but we pray that Thou wouldst be near, that Thou wouldst lift us above our ordinary selves, that Thou wouldst open our minds and hearts to the full influences of the radiance of Thy sunshine, and wouldst speak through us, even us also, that lips may be touched with the live coal, and the word of the Lord be magnified.

Hear us in our prayer, forgive our many sins, and draw near to us and bless us now, through Jesus Christ our Lord and Saviour.

XCIV

LIFT up our hearts, we beseech Thee, O Lord, and give us strength to lift them upwards. May we enter into the secret place of the Most High; and now, not in word or in outward form only, but in the depths of our own hearts, and in the submission of our own wills,

hold fellowship with Thee. Truly when we know what is good for us we do turn away from Thy creatures which do bring to us good meant for us by Thee, and we turn to Thyself from Whom they get all their power to bless us, and in Whom there is all that each and all of them lack.

We thank Thee, O Lord, that Thou dost not put us off with the imperfect joys that come from created things, but that the feeblest of us, and the least worthy, may come joyfully, confidently, closely unto Thyself, and touch Thee heart to heart and mind to mind. May it be so with us this morning, whatever may be our history, whatever our present condition, whatever the burdens that any of us bear, whether of tasks or sorrows or sin; may none of these come between us and Thee, nor anything have power to hinder us from yielding our whole selves to thy sweet and strong influences, drawing us to thyself. May we all hear the great voice calling to us to come up hither, and may we yield to the gracious invitation.

We thank Thee, O Lord, that we can rise above ourselves when we hold by Thy hand which lifts us. And we beseech Thee that Thou wouldst come near to each of us now, and in Thy great mercy bow Thy heavens and speak to our hearts.

We bring Thee our praise for all Thy blessings. Surely showers and crowds of these have entered into our daily lives, but alas! we pass through the things seen, and instead of making them means of seeing and coming to the things unseen and eternal, how often our own weakness makes these barriers between us and our true good and wealth.

We thank Thee for Thy mercies; we pray Thee that we may so use them that they may be mercies to us by

the might and the magic of love to God. May we constrain all things to work together for our good. We cannot but feel how much we have to confess in the matter of our handling of the things temporal. Strengthen us more and more that we may live as those to whom the Eternal is the real, and the temporal is only the transient.

We ask Thee for Thy gracious help day by day in duties, in tasks, in struggles. We beseech Thee that Thou wouldst hold up our goings that our footsteps slip not. May we compel all things to minister to our true progress and well-being. We ask for strength to do, for patience to bear, for cheerful faith, that all which we behold is full of blessing. And may we come into the world as those who bear with them a charm and a secret which changes all things; and come in from the world unto our home in Thy presence all the better fitted for the great joys of communion with God, because in the market-place and in the street we have been true to Him.

Bless us in our worship this morning; draw near to each of us, O Lord! Breathe Thy grace over this gathered congregation. Thou knowest all our hearts, all our secrets, all our needs. We beseech Thee that Thou wouldst come to each of us with that gift which we most require, whether we know what it is or not; that we may find Thee, and be found of thee, which is better. And whether we have come seeking Thee or no, may we apprehend Thy presence even if it comes to us as a surprise.

O Lord, answer these poor petitions, through Jesus Christ our Lord and Saviour.

XCV

O LORD! give us grace to trust in Thee for the supplies of all our needs, that our prayers may be full of confidence; and we may speak as unto Him Who knoweth how to give good things, and the best of all things, His Holy Spirit, to them that ask Him.

We beseech Thee that Thou wouldst be near each of us according to our different vocations and temptations, in our daily duties and the circumstances in which Thou hast appointed us to live. As we pass through these may we be able to apprehend in them Thy holy meaning, and to work in harmony with Thee, that so we may be fellow-labourers with God, and not miss the rich blessings which are stored for us in all the various operations of Thy loving and wise hand. If any of us have come into Thy house weary for help and consolation, bearing but saddened hearts and faltering tongues, help us to cast all our cares upon Thee, knowing that Thou art concerned for us. And may we feel that it is good for us to be afflicted that we may draw near unto God.

And do Thou strengthen us, we pray thee, in all our various duties and tasks of our calling. May they not come between us and Thee. May we bring the highest motives to bear upon them all, great and small. May our daily lives be an embodiment of the will of the Lord, and in everything may we walk not to please ourselves but Him Who hath called us to be His soldiers and servants.

O Lord! guide us, and be with all whom we love; be with all who are in sickness, in solitude, in sorrow, and who are feeling after a stay for their hearts, and may they not fail in their search. Be with all who may have

laid upon them great responsibilities and heavy duties. May the least and the greatest among us use our influence and our possessions and opportunities as in God's sight. Bless all Christian people in all churches, all lands. Be with all who may be feeling after if haply they may find Thee, and who may be far away from outward organisations of Christian people. We pray thee to lead seeking souls into the light. Neutralise all their errors, and ours, and help us to hold by Christ our Head.

We ask Thee to be with us now, to draw near to us and help us, and to speak by us, through us, and to each of us; and forgive and accept us through Jesus Christ our Saviour-Lord.

XCVI

O LORD! we thank Thee that we do know Thee as measureless might, that all that might is wielded by changeless love. We beseech Thee to help us ever to think of Thee as our chief good. May no dread that enslaves and separates cloud our minds and close our hearts when we think of God. May we enter into the blessedness of that great word, that Thou lovest each of us. And do Thou help us day by day, in all our daily duties, to keep ourselves in the love of God.

Help us, too, to this end, as we are gathered here now; and grant, we beseech Thee, the outpouring of Thy divine Spirit on this gathered people, hearers and speaker, that the word of the Lord may have free course and be glorified in us. Draw us near to Thyself in worship; help us to bring all our burdens, our cares, our circumstances, to Thee; and do Thou bless us gathered in Thy Name, and help us to use the outward

forms of worship as means by which we may each for himself and for herself enter into the secret place of the Most High, and worship in the sanctuary there.

We pray Thee to hear us, to grant us Thy blessing; forgiving, upholding, inspiring, and guiding; through Jesus Christ our Saviour-Lord.

XCVII

DRAW all our hearts, we beseech Thee, O Lord, to Thyself; and help us to lift them above our earthly vanities and realities, our tasks, sorrows, enjoyments, and to come very near to Thyself in lowly love, in lofty aspiration, in full surrender of ourselves to Thee.

We come in that great Name, the only Name given unto men whereby we must be saved, and we bless Thee that every one of us has the right to say that He was slain for us. May all of us know how much we need a Saviour, for ourselves and for our sins, and how strong and sufficient a Saviour we have in the Lamb of God that taketh away the sins of the world.

We bless Thee for the Word; and we would crown Him as our King, and bring to Him majesty and honour and power and riches, unceasing praise and measureless love. May it be so, O Lord, with us all; and may our devotion to Jesus Christ be the power that moulds our lives, that lifts us above temptation, that arms us against sorrows and cares, that teaches us to expect; and helps us to attain heights of nobleness and goodness else inaccessible to our feeble feet. We thank Thee for all the strength which has been given in time past to souls that have builded upon Him, and taken their refuge through Him in Thee.

We pray that to each of us, according to our

different duties and circumstances in the world, our tasks, temptations, relationships and opportunities, there may be granted the needful grace out of the rich storehouse which Thou hast laid up for the world in Thy well-beloved Son. Oh! help us, day by day, to run with patient perseverance the race set before us, feeling no duties too small to be done with the best effort of heart and mind, and none too great to be successfully accomplished by Thy help. May none of the many applications in our daily lives break our fellowship with God. May all things visible help us to see through them more clearly the things that are unseen.

If any of us have any special weight of responsibility or duty that seems to our faithlessness too strong for our strength; any sorrow that our hearts find it hard to bear and be thankful, draw near to such with the sustaining, enlightening, comforting influences which Thou hast at hand, and speak to our hearts that they may be of good courage, and wait upon the Lord. Do Thou help us in all slippery places to stand fast because our feet are on the Rock, and our hands grasping Christ's hands. May we tread in His footsteps, and so walk in the ways which are peace and righteousness. Do Thou forgive all our imperfections, cleanse our hearts from our besetting sins, deliver us from the dominion of transgressions unsuspected and unknown by ourselves. Help us to have loftier views, day by day, of what is the walk that is worthy of our vocation; and strengthen us that we may never see anything as duty which we do not gladly endeavour to appropriate, and to make our own.

We beseech Thee to help us, that in our worship some words may be spoken that shall be in accordance with Thy holy will, that may be felt by many of us to be

God's own voice to us. Take Thou our own thoughts and words, and put Thine own Divine power into them; and grant, we beseech Thee, that this evening many may be drawn nearer to the Source of all strength and blessedness, of all forgiveness and holiness, by Jesus Christ Himself.

Guide any of us that are in circumstances of perplexity and difficulty, O Lord, we pray. If any here have special cause for thanksgiving, the Lord help them to enjoy His mercy with grateful hearts, and to take the cup of salvation, and not forget to call upon the Name of the Lord. Bless all Christian people who this day have gathered and offered up their sacrifices of prayer and praise to Thee. May many be drawn into the Kingdom of Jesus Christ by this day's services, and many whose faith shall be built up by the communion of saints enjoyed this day.

And now, O Lord, we would commend ourselves to Thy gracious care. We pray for Thy help, without which nothing is strong. We beseech Thee to take away all hindrances, in ourselves and in our circumstances, which may interfere with our full enjoyment and profit by the service of this evening.

Hear us, O Lord, in these our prayers; and in Thy great mercy forgive, answer, and bless, for our Saviour Christ's sake.

XCVIII

O LORD, from Whom cometh the preparation of the heart, and from Whom cometh the answer of peace, help us to direct our thoughts and our desire to Thyself, and to look up in faithful acceptance that Thou wilt hear. Thou hast heard, Thou art the same yester-

day and to-day and for ever, and Thou hast won for Thyself the name of the God that heareth. We beseech Thee to hear us. We come laden with many burdens, some of us with sorrows, all of us with cares, duties, and sins. And we all need the one help, though we need it in manifold ways, according to our present necessities and our diverse characters. But give to us that manifold grace of Thine which takes all shapes according to our needs, and is ever of the right sort and sufficient measure.

We thank Thee that the light of Thy presence is enough for direction, for strength, for everything. Help us, then, that we may not, as we so often have done, cast away the blessing of Thy presence, and shut up our hearts against Thee. May no indulged and unknown evil part us from Thee. And teach us our faults; we need to learn them more clearly and to feel them more deeply, that we may fight against them more resolutely. We pray Thee to give us this light, though often it be a light that pains; we thank Thee it is always a light that would heal. Reveal to us our thoughts then, we pray, and keep us back from the sins that, though we know them, we may yet run into. And may we be impelled more and more to all righteousness and holiness, all nobleness and goodness of life and character. When we are wisest we feel most certainly that we are here that we may grow more like Thyself. And whilst we acknowledge how little we have used circumstances and providences and opportunities in order to increase in the knowledge of, and likeness to, Thee, and pray that Thy pardon may be granted to us for all that has been amiss, may we in time to come learn better, and feel more deeply, the solemn issues connected with our fleeting days; and

may strive, in and through them, to obtain a more assured possession of the inward good that can never be taken away from us.

We thank Thee for all the associations and memories of this day and of this place. We thank Thee most chiefly for the most sacred of all remembrances, the rising of our Lord and Saviour ; and we pray that that Resurrection may not only be for us the pledge of our own immortality, but that it may be the Pattern whereunto our present lives are conformed, so that we may indeed be risen with Christ ; and even whilst we labour here on earth in the diligent discharge of our duties in connection with the fleeting things in time, may be 'sitting at the right hand of God,' with Him in the heavenly places.

We beseech Thee for Thy blessing and the power of Thy Spirit to rest upon us in our gathering this morning. We thank Thee for the opportunity of uniting together thus, to strengthen one another, as we hope. Our many feeblenesses brought together may minister somewhat more of strength to each of us, because Thou art present not only with the solitary souls that seek thy face hiddenly, but with the gathered assembly of Thy people who with one accord call down Thy blessings upon their heads. May that 'one accord' be felt by us this morning, and may we here realise that it is no vain thing to call upon the Lord, and that our gathering together is for the better, not for the worse.

Receive our thanks for all Thy blessings towards us. Help us to be more observant of these things, that we may understand better the loving-kindness of the Lord. May our faith not stumble on blessings that come to us in the disguise of sorrows. They are Thy

angels, though their faces be dark. Teach us to understand the meaning of all Thy dealings with us, and so to influence our thoughts and our hearts now, and always, as that we may be able to bless Thee truly and honestly for the way by which Thou hast led us, though sometimes it has been in rough and stormy places, and sometimes through the very valley of the shadow of death. We beseech Thee to accept us now, to forgive all our evil, to grant us Thy gracious and quickening and perfecting help and presence, through Jesus Christ our Saviour-Lord.

XCIX

O LORD, our gracious Father, Who knowest all our needs yet better than we know them ourselves, we often ask for stones thinking them to be bread. Thou knowest better. We thank Thee for the refusal of foolish petitions, we thank Thee for the granting of all that are in accordance with Thy will which is love. We beseech Thee that we may carry into our daily lives the firm assurances that no evil befalls them who put their hope on the Lord their God. Give us more of that sweet and ennobling love which shall work like magic upon all sorrows and pains, and make them all ministers of blessing. If any of us here this morning have come into Thy house with heavy hearts, breathe Thy peace into their spirits, and help us to rise above whatever may be sad and dark in our present experiences, and lead us into the light and gladness of Thy own gracious presence, and accepted will.

O Lord! guide us day by day in the little and in the great things of life. May we feel that we have Thee near us. Keep us from the sluggishness of spirit that

often creeps over us. Deliver us from the indifference to our highest good, and our blindness to the most solemn and important realities; and help us to order our lives wisely, making the first things first, and seeking chiefly and primarily the Kingdom of God and His righteousness. We feel that our lives have been too often misordered and distracted with a multiplicity of trifles. Help us to be willing to exchange the many for the One, the goodly pearls for the Pearl of great price, which we are rich if we part with all and so possess.

O Lord! speak to us in Thy grace this morning. Breathe Thy word into our hearts and minds. May hearers and speaker alike feel that they are in the presence of the oracle of God, and that Thou Thyself art with us now.

We commend to Thee all whom we love; we pray Thee to bless all good people who are trying to do Thy holy will, especially those who are seeking to spread the knowledge of Jesus, and of His great salvation throughout the world.

And now, O Lord, we desire to commend ourselves to Thee. We pray Thee to bless us and be with us, to forgive and answer us, through Christ our Saviour.

C

O LORD! we have to look to Thee to teach us what and how to pray. We thank Thee that Thou dost breathe into waiting hearts desires in accordance with Thy holy will; and we would ask, first, that we may be delivered from the dominion of false and foolish wishes, and learn more than ever what is our true good, and where it is to be found. We have hewed

out for ourselves broken cisterns, often broken in the very act of hewing them, always broken sooner or later. But we thank Thee that we have the Fountain of living water to come to when our lives are parched. Help us now, that our souls may thirst for good, and thirsting be satisfied, and being satisfied may press hard after Thee.

O Lord! deliver us from the bondage to which we are only too willing to submit, and against which we sometimes feebly and vainly struggle. We thank Thee that Thou canst break our chains, that Thou canst lift our heavy hearts that cleave to earth. How much there is in this day, if we rightly used it, to help us upwards to Thee! We thank Thee for the memories of past days here, and above all for that great remembrance of the Resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead. May we be upborne by the hand of that risen Saviour, and may we, too, have life breathed into us from His eternal life. May we die to sin, and be alive unto God, through Christ our Lord.

May we worship towards Thy holy temple, in Thy fear, that fear which hath no torment. And do Thou graciously help us that the world may loosen its hold upon us, and Heaven increase and tighten its hold. May the things seen and temporal diminish, and the things unseen and eternal become greater in our eyes. May we this day realise more and more how our true life lies far beyond this vale of tears; and that true life which comes in union with Thyself be strong in each of us, and we feel the beatings of a better life, and take it to our feebly throbbing heart. May the memory of Thy benefits lead us to quiet faith and calm hope that to-morrow will be as this day, and much more abundant.

We bless Thee that Thy great storehouse is not emptied by any giving, and that Thou dost never lack the opportunity to bestow upon us Thy kindness and Thy care. Help us that we may welcome into our hearts as Thy gifts all good things, and use them as those ought to do who possess nothing but as stewards, and are administrators unto others of Thy benefits to ourselves.

Be near us, we pray Thee, in our worship now; forgive everything in us which has interfered with the full preparation of heart and mind for this service, and the full possession of the blessings which it is meant to give. Graciously loosen our bonds, and help us in our sluggishness and coldness to rise nearer to Thyself and shake off the oppression of daily cares and low occupations, and to live near Thee now for this brief time that in it there may lie the seeds of good for many days to come, and quickening influences which shall spread through all our lives. We thank Thee for Thy mercies; we beseech Thee to forgive our many imperfections and sins, and help us in our hour of worship, through Jesus Christ our Lord and Saviour.

CI

O LORD, Who givest what Thou dost command, give unto us that new creature coming through faith by our participation in the life of Thy dear Son. Help us that our Christianity may not be concerned with outward things so much as with the recreation and renovation of our inmost nature. Help us to walk according to this rule, and thereby be of the true Israel of God, and have Thy praise on us and with us.

We thank Thee that in all our weakness Thou art

near us. Be our strength, and since Thou knowest our frame, and dost remember that we are dust, come and deliver us from the burden of our own weakness, and help us to grow in our possession and use of the life that is in Jesus.

Help us, O Lord, to bear one another's burdens and our own, and to cast all upon Thyself. Some of us have heavy ones to carry, but do Thou be gracious unto us, and deliver us from the vain effort to be sufficient for ourselves, either in our duties or in our sorrows. We thank Thee that Thou sendest no man a warfare at his own charges, and art ever ready to bestow the power to do what Thy will enjoins or Thy providences point out as our duty. Help us to live in the peace of dependence upon Thyself, and in the joy of a felt communication from Thee of power according to our tasks and strength according to our day.

Be near us in all the variety of duty and of circumstances represented here before Thee amongst us this morning. Though we know so little, and can do less, to supply each other's deepest needs, we thank Thee that we can help one another by common prayer. However diverse our various walks of life, we thank Thee that we may still be all doing the same thing; for though there be diversities of service it is the one Lord, and all His servants' works are one, since they are all done for Him. May we carry the thought with us into all the great and small things of daily life, that great or small has nothing to do with the acceptance of our service; and that it is required of stewards that whether in regard to that which is least, or in regard to that which is much, a man may be found faithful. Make us increasingly so, we pray, and do Thou

graciously keep Thy hands upon us to bless our work, and to prevent it from ever drawing us away from Thyself. And we would bring these our friends to Thy throne who are in sorrow; lovingly remember, O Lord, the many whom Thou dost love who are sick. Keep Thy children close to Thyself.

Accept us in our prayer for all who love Thee, who try to serve Thee. Pour out Thy blessing upon all professing Christians. May the lips of those who call themselves Thine bear witness for Thee, Whose they are and Whom they serve. Give Thy Holy Spirit's influence to all true words spoken in the world for God and man. And may the Kingdom which is above all kingdoms of this world be established with righteousness and peace and joy in the Holy Ghost, and be the possession of all mankind.

And now we pray Thee to hear us; we beseech Thy forgiveness, and commit ourselves to Thy gracious care in the confidence that Thou wilt be near us if we depart not far from Thee, and that Thou wilt keep us from departing from Thee if we leave ourselves in Thy hands. Pity and accept and answer us, O Lord, for Jesus Christ our Saviour's sake.

CII

UNTO Thee, O Lord, would we lift up our souls, but Thou knowest how hard we find it to loose them from the bonds which bind them to earth. And so we cry to Thee that Thou wouldst come down to us that we may rise to Thee. Thou hast promised that Thou wilt breathe into waiting hearts the desires which Thou dost delight to implant and to impart. And we beseech Thee that Thou wouldst look upon our earthly-

mindfulness with pity, and give us the buoyancy of earnest desire after Thee that we may have Thy hand upholding us whilst our souls follow hard after Thee.

We thank Thee for the helps which sense gives to spirit on this day and in this place. May we not tarry in the means, but pass beyond them to their great purpose, and hold fellowship in the depths of our hearts with our Father-God.

We beseech Thee to accept our humble thankfulness for all Thy loving-kindness and tender care, filtered to us through daily blessings, of the things that perish, and poured upon us in all its fulness in Thy unspeakable gift which carries with it the free gift of all things.

We thank Thee for Jesus Christ; we thank Thee for the love in Him; we thank Thee for that Divine Spirit which comes to abide in men's hearts through faith in Thy Son. We thank Thee that unto them that believe in His Name Thou givest the authority to become sons of God. We pray that He in Whom are hid all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge may be ours, and we be His, that all things may be ours also. We thank Thee for daily benefits; we beseech Thee to help us to look upon them more wisely, as the sacraments and pledges of Thy changeless love, and of the higher gifts which Thou art ready to bestow upon us; and that we may so use the things seen and temporal as that they shall confirm and increase our possession of the things that are unseen and eternal. May the life that now is, in outward things, lead us on to the life that is for ever, and standeth in the possession and the knowledge of God.

O Lord! cleanse our hearts, we pray, from all in

them that is contrary to Thy holy will, and teach us to understand that will more deeply and more fully, for dormant lurking in our conduct and in our characters are actions and desires contrary to Thy holy self.

We pray Thee to strengthen us day by day to pursue the great task of cleansing ourselves from all filthiness of flesh and spirit, and we beseech Thee that Thou wouldst teach even us transgressors Thy way. We are emboldened to ask it because we know that good and upright is the Lord. And we thank Thee that Thy goodness and uprightness do not now, since we have learnt Thee in Jesus Christ, repel us from Thyself, but rather draw us to Thee. Surely Thy deepest desire is to make Thy children like the Father, and we pray then that Thy goodness and uprightness may communicate themselves to us, and that we may too be able to walk in the ways that are higher than our ways, and to think the thoughts that are higher than our thoughts.

O Lord! cleanse, purge, purify by Thy discipline and by Thy Spirit, and help us day by day to overcome in the conflict with our own evil, and to be lords and masters of the things around us. We beseech Thee for Thy blessing as we are gathered here this morning, and adore Thy loving-kindness and Thy tender care, which, knowing our frame and remembering that we are dust, dost permit and enjoin us to gather together thus, and help one another in the Divine life, and towards communion with Thyself. May we this morning truly have our fellowship with the Father, and with His Son Jesus Christ. And may our gathering together help each of us to fill up that which is lacking in our faith, and to be more assuredly and joyously in the possession of that power which cleanses

from all unrighteousness, and makes partakers of the very fullness of God.

We beseech Thee to forgive our many sins, to accept our humble petitions, and to grant us the light of Thy countenance to shine in our hearts and on our paths, for the sake of Him Who brings all light into our darkness, even our Saviour Jesus Christ.

CIII

O LORD our God, we thank Thee for that Eternal Light which was with Thee, and has been manifested to us. And we pray that we may be brought more and more into fellowship with Thy dear Son, and may draw from Him that life which, like His, is in the Light.

We pray Thee to shed abroad upon us Thy gracious influences that our meeting together may be for our good, and that each may be aware of receiving some impulse from Thyself which shall carry us on some stages further in the life which is the true life, the life of fellowship with Thee and of separation from all unrighteousness. We thank Thee for all Thy past gifts and mercies to us, and pray Thee that Thou wouldst still be near each of us according to our different necessities and circumstances, and so mould the dealings of Thy providence and the communications of Thy grace to us as that these may answer one another, and together further our growth in the grace and knowledge of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ.

Speak peace to all sad hearts, stand by those who have burdens to bear, or conflicts to wage, and lead us day by day in the paths of righteousness which

Thou hast ordained to be paths of peace. Shed abroad Thy grace upon all Christian communities under every name and language and country; and grant that all Thy people may be taught of God, and be teachers for God in the world. Bless all we love, present or absent, we beseech Thee. Thou art the confidence of all the ends of the earth, and of them that are afar off upon the sea. We commit our dear ones to Thee, nor would we forget wider interests; but pray that Thy mercy may be spread throughout mankind, and that all nations may learn who is the true Lord and King, and be gathered together in amity and peace around His footstool.

Hear and forgive, we pray; grant us Thy gracious presence as we worship, through Jesus Christ our Lord and Saviour.

CIV

HELP us, O Lord, to call upon our souls and all that is within us to bless Thy holy Name. For surely Thy Name is a strong tower into which running we can be safe. We thank Thee for all the glories that compose it, for all the revelation of Thyself in all the works of Thy hands, in all the dealings of Thy providence, in the depths of our own hearts, in the good thoughts which Thou dost breathe into men's minds, in all the truth and goodness and beauty which fill the world, and speak to us. We thank Thee that Thou hast gathered all these utterances at sundry times and in divers manners into the one great Revelation of Thyself through Thy Son, in Whom is Thy Name. May we learn it all, may we love it all, may we obey all the commandments, and realise all

the blessings that are stored up in the Name which is above every name. In that Name we draw near to Thee now, building all our confidence, not on what we are, but on what Thou art, and thanking Thee that though clouds and darkness are round about Thy throne, righteousness and judgment are its pillars, and Love is enthroned there.

We beseech Thee, then, to help us that we may draw near to Thee now, with the peaceful confidence, with the calm certitude, with the joyful hope which become us. May we not receive the light and love the darkness, may we not repel the light by our love of the darkness. May we walk in the light as Thou art the Light, and in it. We pray for Thy cleansing grace, for Thine uplifting power, for Thy comforting, strengthening spirit; and we ask Thee that our inward being, conformed to Thy will, may ever issue in thoughts and words and acts which shall witness for Thee.

We pray for Thy pardoning mercy, and beseech Thee that Thou wouldst help us to look upon our own faultful selves in some measure as Thou dost look upon us. May we be delivered from all the deceitfulness of evil, and made wise to see the things that are contrary to Thy holy will. May we have no tolerance for our own faults, and no intolerance for those of others. May we walk before Thee in the paths of righteousness which Thou hast appointed, and then we shall find them to be paths of peace.

Bless us in all our ways; guide us by Thy counsel; make us wise to know Thy will, swift to apprehend the commandments which we love, and glad to do the good which Thou dost appoint for us. In all our

ways help us to keep Thee before us. May we live, not as in the great Taskmaster's eye, but happy in the thought as a child for its father, that Thou God seest us; and may that keep us from being guilty of much transgression, and quick and eager for all good. Hear us, and be near us as we worship before Thee; accept and answer us, for our Lord Christ's sake.

CV

O LORD, our gracious Father, we would again draw near unto Thee to Whom we must ever come anew for life itself, and for all its blessings. And we lift up our hearts with thankfulness to Thee that Thou hast given to us so richly out of Thy full hand, and in the greatness of Thy mercy taught us whence our mercies come that we may bring them back to Thee by the devotion and thankfulness of our hearts, and by faithful stewardship in them all.

Help us, we beseech Thee, thus to live, keeping that which is committed to our trust, and committing to Thy keeping ourselves and all that belongs to us. Help us to take Thee for our Portion. May we not trust in the uncertainty of anything here below, but in the living God Who giveth us all things richly to enjoy, and Who Himself is the richness of our wealth and the gladness of our joy.

O Lord, pour out Thy blessing upon us all according to our need. Help us to speak, help us to hear, Thy word. May the Master Himself be in our midst, and our poor utterances be made strong and sufficient by His gracious aid. Do Thou write Thy message upon our wills and hearts as well as upon our minds. Lead us, we pray, into those depths of God where truth

shines and peace abides. Strengthen us, day by day, for our daily tasks, helping us to apprehend what the good and acceptable and perfect will of the Lord is; and helping us to do it, in so far as it is revealed unto us, that thereby we may learn more and more of the councils of the Most High, and of our duties.

We pray Thee to bind up all wounds which Thy loving providence makes in our hearts; and help us, when we suffer, to commit the keeping of our souls to Thee in well-doing, as unto a faithful Creator and loving Father. Strengthen and support all who may, in any special manner, need Thy succour. Grant us grace, according to our different characters and positions, to be Thy faithful servants, the stewards of Thy riches, and the soldiers of Thy host in the world.

Withdraw not Thy gracious presence from us, but accept and forgive as we come in the Name of Jesus Christ our Saviour-Lord.

CVI

O LORD our Lord, help us, we beseech Thee, to make Thee ours, and to make ourselves Thine. We thank Thee that like as a Father pitieth His children Thou pitiest. Knowing our frame, and looking upon us with the loving eye of a faithful Creator, Thou wilt satisfy the souls whom Thou hast made to need Thee. Thou hearest the ravens when they cry, and Thou wilt answer us. Give us that which our empty souls need, that which our lonely lives require, that which our seeking groping hearts do often feel after, and mistakenly think that we have found in Thy creatures. Give us Thyself that we may be strong, and that it may

be well with us, and that we may be pure and right, and like Thee.

We bless Thee that Thou dost not disdain to enter the narrow room of our hearts. We thank Thee that Thou canst tread the path thither, and be nearer us than all loves, and closer to us than some parts of ourselves, and more really with us than our flesh and blood is. We thank Thee for the union possible between us and Thee, and we pray Thee to take out of our hearts and characters every separating film, everything that comes between us and God.

O Lord! we draw near to Thee this morning with lowly thanksgiving for all Thy great mercies; but we pray, too, that our hearts and minds may never be so occupied with the sweetness of these, or with the bitterness of our sorrows, as that either the one or the other may come between us and Thee. Help us to use the things seen and temporal as *media* by which we can draw near to Thee, not as barriers by which we shut Thee out from ourselves.

We confess our many sins in this respect, and how hard it has been for us, and is, day by day, to keep God in our hearts and minds whilst our hands and thoughts are fully occupied with the duties which God gives us. But we pray Thee that Thou wouldst help us day by day to renew our hold on Thee, and may we have quiet and secret moments when we refresh our spirits, and tighten our grasp of the great verities and of the great God, and so be able to go out into life and not lose our hold of either.

We pray Thee to give us Thy gracious help and presence, without which our service here is but as sounding brass and tinkling cymbal. We pray Thee to make our approach to Thee more real, very sincere,

and very simple. May we pass beyond forms to our Father, and receive from Him forgiveness of sins, help in worship, lifting away of every burden; and drawing near with true hearts and full assurance of faith may we realise what we desire, and feel that we have with us our Father-God. We pray Thee to forgive our sins, and accept our petitions, through Jesus Christ our Lord.

CVII

OUR Father, which art in Heaven, may we receive that Christ-baptism of the Holy Ghost and of fire which shall burn up all our coldness, and dissolve our impurities, and make us as the fine gold tried in the fire. We thank Thee for the spirit of burning. We beseech Thee to cleanse us by that swift energy, and to make us more and more what Thou wouldst have us to be, like Thyself in holiness and in purity.

We draw near to Thee, O Lord, with many needs in our experience, some of us with weights upon our hearts, all of us with tasks upon our shoulders; and we beseech Thee for strength according to our day. May we have grace given to us to face the duties that are enjoined upon us. May we look to Thee for all our power, for little things and great. In the trivialities of life, and in its crises, may we realise Thy presence; may we run and not be weary, may we walk and not faint.

Help us, wherever Thy providence leads us, to carry deep in our hearts, for peace and for power, the assurance of the presence of Thy Spirit; and out of the secret place of the Most High may we come into the world influences for good and for God, and be ourselves kept free from much transgression.

We pray Thee to comfort and succour any among us who have come into Thy house seeking for peace and consolation, with aching hearts that need Thy gentlest touch, with sorrows that Thou only canst console. We bless Thee that amidst all the varieties of our troubles there is the one Source open for us all ; and may none of us neglect the great Comforter, nor shut our hearts against Thy loving whispers of peace and stillness. Do Thou help us to use aright our sorrows and our joys, that by all the changes of their vicissitudes we may be swept nearer to Thee, that the cross-currents of our lives may all drift towards God ; and that whatever Thou dost send us we may be able to undertake in Thy power, and be more than conquerors through Him that loved us.

Accept our thanks for all Thy mercies to us ; forgive, we beseech Thee, our unworthy requital of Thee for them, and our often unworthy use of them. Oh to carry the thought of Thyself into every corner of our activities, and every experience and emotion of our lives !

We beseech Thee to guide us by Thy counsel, and speak some words through us and to us that may be true and profitable to us all. Accept our praise that Thou dost gather us together thus. May this gift of Thy day of rest be to us a day of gladness, of resurrection, of recreation of our spirits, of the consolidation of our faith, of the increase of our love, of the more resolved consecration of ourselves to whatsoever things are lovely and of good report, and to Thee Who art the fountain of them all.

Hear us in these our supplications, and in Thy great mercy answer and bless us, through Jesus Christ our Saviour-Lord.

CVIII

O LORD! Who hast of old called a man Thy friend, may we be friends of Thine, and Abraham's God be our God. Thou art the same to-day as in the most blessed yesterday, and as in the most glorious to-morrow. May we feel Thee with us, a present God in each present moment of our lives; and do Thou give us Thy strength to live, and Thy peace in our hearts in all circumstances. May we indeed celebrate Thy praise, and magnify Thy holy Name in our daily lives.

Look upon us, and give us Thy blessing this evening. May that divine Spirit Whom Thou hast promised and given be felt to be with us, and may all our service be rendered in, and accepted through, Jesus Christ our Lord and Saviour.

CIX

O LORD! our gracious God, Who in Jesus Christ dost call us to Thyself, weary and heavy laden we would come, for our souls need rest. We pray that Thou wouldst help every one of us to take upon us that easy yoke which helps us to draw the light burden of obedience to a loved Master's commandments.

We pray Thee that Thou wouldst indeed manifest Thy love to each of our hearts. And oh! help us not to be disobedient to the heavenly vision, nor to turn away from the revelation of Thy grace. We need Thee for daily life, in all its continually recurring small duties, and in the great moments of it. We need Thee in our joys as much as in our sorrows. We need Thee in life as in death.

Preserve us from the thought that it is time to think

of Thee when the sands are running low. Preserve us from looking upon Thy truth and the great message of Thy love in Jesus Christ as a thing that may be neglected till the end is near. Deliver us from the temptations so thickly sown in all our lives, and so seconded by our own weakness to put away from ourselves that which concerns us most. May we have the wisdom to seek the best things first, and to put the world second, and God and His will and His Kingdom in the foremost place. And may we order our lives by Heaven's light and Heaven's laws, and whatever other companionship we may have, or whatever solitude we may have to walk in, may we walk with God and realise Thy Presence, Thy thrilling Presence, Thy sanctifying, gladdening, strengthening, peace-giving presence, in every part of our experience of daily life.

O Lord! regard us here before Thee according to all the diversity of our necessities and characters. Thou dost appoint our paths for us. As we would believe, Thou art the Lord of circumstances; make us lords of them by the recognition of Thy presence in them. And whatever may be our present condition, whether of sorrow or joy, ease or trouble, help us in each of our duties and in all our lives. If any of us have to face temptations, either of a practical or an intellectual kind, do Thou strengthen us, we pray Thee, in the conflict. Be Thou our peace in heavy sorrows, our light in darkness. If any of us are called to face duties from which we shrink because they are disagreeable or hard, be Thou our strength. Teach us all what is Thy holy will, and make us careful so to live that we may never be out of hearing of the call of the great Shepherd.

We pray Thee to guide our thoughts when we try to speak a word in Thy Name. Be Thou our Strength, for

our own strength is weakness. Move Thou upon the thoughts of those that hear, that the word which we can only address to the outward ear may become the engrafted word which is able to save the soul. Other teachers speak to us; do Thou, Lord, speak in us.

Hear us now, we beseech Thee; give us Thy gracious help in our worship; forgive all our imperfections and the iniquities of our holy things, and draw near to us in Thy grace and love, through Jesus Christ our Lord.

CX

O LORD, our gracious God, we humbly confess that our ways are not as Thy ways. We joyfully accept the assurance that as the heavens are higher than the earth, so are Thy ways higher than our ways, and Thy thoughts than our thoughts. We cannot conceive of Thee, of Thy love, of Thy tender heart, of Thine infinite compassion, of Thy love which hopeth all things for the worst of us, and beareth all things from the worst of us. But we bless Thee that as from the heavens come down all fruitful-making power, so from Thee there will come to our barren natures, if we keep our hearts open to the noontide of God, all things that shall root out the briar and bring forth the myrtle, and that shall make even our poverty rich and our unfruitfulness fruitful.

We come to claim our portion, O Lord, in Thy great love and tender care. We thank Thee for the large tokens and results of that love and care which are given to us all, even when we neither claim them nor recognise their source. But we would not be blind to the great Fountain from which all the streams of blessing come, nor would we be unthankful even whilst

we enjoy Thy manifold mercies. Therefore we pray Thee, O Lord, that Thou wouldst help us to realise our continual dependence upon Thee, and to rejoice in it; to see that in Thee we live and move and have our being; that from Thee all that brightens life, all that ennobles life and makes us glad, all that helps us to be good, comes. May we ever thus recognise Thy presence in the world, and feel that all things are drenched with God; that we ourselves are in fellowship with Him.

Help us day by day to live in the light of Thy face. May that light conquer all our native darkness, whether it be ignorance or sin or sorrow. Redeem us from the bondage of corruption; and bring us, we beseech Thee, into the liberty of the glory of the children of God.

We thank Thee, O Lord, for all Thy great goodness to us. We bless Thee that Thou hast always been beside us to further and to help us; to enrich us with many blessings; to anticipate and disappoint many forebodings and fears; to lead us, though we often have been blind, by the way that we know not. Thou hast surprised us with mercy as well as sometimes with sorrow, and Thou hast done all from a loving heart, and for the great purpose that we might be partakers of Thy holiness. May that purpose be fulfilled in us. May we grow in whatsoever things are lovely and of good report, and so adorn the teaching in all things.

Accept our thanks, we beseech Thee, for Thy manifold blessings. Be near us as we draw near to Thy mercy-seat. Pour some beams of Thine own light into our hearts, and clear away the mists that so often come between us and Thee. And whatever pressure of care, or duty, or of exciting occupations, may have come with us into Thy presence, may the grip of all earthly things be slackened now, and our souls set free to soar,

that thereby we may come down again to earth and work all the better there.

We beseech Thee to grant Thy blessing on our worship, and to accept and answer us, through Jesus Christ our Lord and Saviour.

CXI

O LORD our God, let Thy light shine in us and through us, we beseech Thee. And may it so shine as to show Thee, and not us, to every seeing eye. We thank Thee for these great promises; we pray that Thou wouldst help us to fulfil the conditions. May we be poor in spirit, mourning, meek, merciful, peace-bringing, and living the Christ-life in the world. May we possess the Christ-given blessing, and have to-day, and not only in some distant future, the Kingdom of Heaven, which is righteousness and peace and joy in the Holy Ghost, for our treasure.

Help us, we pray, to war against everything in ourselves which is against Thee, and so against our own highest good; and give us Thy grace that, day by day, as Thy faithful servants, we may delight to do Thy will, and as Thy soldiers fight the good fight of faith.

We beseech Thee for help in all our changing circumstances. Lead us by Thy counsel in any difficulty or perplexity which comes to us in the ordering of our daily lives. May we never be at a loss as to what duty is, and having docile hearts may we be ever taught, and knowing these things may we possess the blessing of those that do them. Keep us from letting our actions stray away from the control of our deepest principles. Keep us from letting the things which we profess to believe lie idle in our minds. May we live our faith,

and may all our days be penetrated and enlightened by the strength that we believe. May all our work be worship. And if any of us have special burdens of sorrow to carry, and surely there are some here this morning with heavy hearts, may they find that yielding to Thee brings peace; and when the will melts, unseen by any but themselves, blessing begins to come. May it be so with us all, in our various trials and difficulties.

Give us a blessing, O Lord, as we seek to renew our faith, and deepen our love by our service now. Give us some word to speak that may be Thy word, and have power in all our hearts and consciences to move our wills, to enlighten our understandings, to guide us into the perception and the practice of the truth as it is in Jesus.

We beseech Thee to hear us, and to bless all who, in like manner, are drawing near to Thee to-day; and to shed abroad Thy gracious influences upon all their hearts and ours, through Jesus Christ our Lord and Saviour.

CXII

O LORD, most gracious, Who art very near to us to know, and knowing to pity, and pitying to help, help us now, we beseech Thee; for the more we need Thee the less we feel after Thee, and the further away from Thee we are the more we need Thy drawing hand. Strengthen us, we beseech Thee, that we may yield ourselves to the outward associations, and to the memories of this day; and may find that for once the things seen do help us to a firmer and a more peaceful possession of the things unseen.

We praise Thee, O Lord, that Thou dost thus appoint

our gathering together that our many weaknesses may unite to bring some strength, and the dying embers drawn together may break into a flame. We thank Thee for all the blessings which Thou art wont to give to those who in secret seek Thy face. We thank Thee for the blessings which Thou art wont to give to those who, in company with their brethren, draw near to Thee; and as Thou hast permitted us to assemble thus may we not be without the consciousness of that presence in the midst of us which moulds all our coldness, which lifts us up into the fellowship of Christ's own ascended life, and causes us to sit together in heavenly places with Him. May we, this morning, be able to shake off from ourselves chains and hindrances, and to draw near to Thee.

And grant, O Lord, that we may not merely feel after Thee, if haply we may find Thee, but seek, as those do who know where that which they seek for is, and in seeking do find.

We pray Thee to apply Thy manifold grace to us in the fashion which we may severally most need. Some of us have brought sluggish and heavy hearts into Thy presence. Quicken us, O Lord, that we may call upon Thy Name, and that we may run after Thee, and find Thee. Some of us have come in outward form, with no real approach of heart to Thee. Mayest Thou be found of them that seek Thee not, and manifest Thyself even to careless eyes, that they may turn aside to see this great sight, dimly beheld before them, and half understood. Some of us have brought into Thy presence sorrowful souls; comfort Thou such, and may all our troubles always bring us nearer Thee, and never, as they so often do, drive us away from Thee. We have all come with deep needs, and the

deepest of all is the need for Thyself. O help us to understand ourselves, in the depths of our beings, and to be sure that nothing will satisfy us except God. And may that conviction rule in our lives, and not only dawn upon us now and then, and then be swallowed up again in the clouds.

O may no earth-born cloud arise
To hide Thee from Thy servant's eyes.

May we live near to Thee, and may our worship of this morning help us to permanent and stable fellowship with Thyself, which shall not be broken but rather increased by the necessity of going out into the world; because there we go to do Thy will, and find Thee manifesting Thyself at sundry times and in divers manners.

Help us, we pray Thee, that thus this day may not be so much an exception to the ordinary course of our thoughts and endeavours and desires, as that it may be a reservoir of strength from which there shall come the power that shall assimilate the other days to itself, and make all our work worship.

O Lord! cleanse our hearts, we beseech Thee. Prepare us now for an hour of true devotion and communion with Thyself. May earth's noises be silenced, and the chains that so often bind us down to this present scene be relaxed, and we set free to soar and to come near to God. Mercifully accept our thanks for all Thy great mercies to us. We know not their number; we thank Thee for their unbroken stream, many-coloured, and with many an apparent cross-current in it which all flows from Thyself, and is all meant to bear us on its course towards Thee. Accept our praise, and help us to live our praise, and to use all

the things which Thou dost send—the changes of condition, the stages of growth and progress, our sorrows and our joys, our achievements and our failures, our hopes fulfilled and our hopes disappointed—to use them all that they may bring us nearer to God, and make us in fuller measure partakers of His holiness.

We beseech Thee to hear us, and in Thy grace accept and answer us, through Jesus Christ our Lord and Saviour.

CXIII

O LORD, our merciful Father, Thou seest our hearts and knowest how often they betray us, and how hard we find it to unite our hearts in the single-eyed fear and service of Thyself. So many rivals seek to draw us away, and there is so much in us that yields to the drawing. But we beseech Thee that Thou wouldst help us in all the relations to, and administration of, the things here on earth to use them in Thy service, to make them not antagonists to Thee, but revealers of Thee, and helpers towards Thee. May all life speak to us of God, and all duty be stamped with His commandment, and done by His help. May all possessions, inward or outward, all capacities, facilities, opportunities, resources, all acquirements and attainments, all that we are, and all that we have, be more completely yielded up unto Him from Whom all has come. We pray Thee to accept, and by accepting enrich, our poverty, and to make us more and more possessors of Thyself, in the fullness which is possible to us whilst we are here.

O Lord! we pray Thee to lead us day by day along that road of daily duty. May it not be a lonely one.

It is Thy providence that determines whether it shall be a crooked one or a straight one, abounding in rough places or smooth and plain. We dare not make petitions of our desires in that respect, but we beseech Thee that upon that highway no ravenous beast may come up, nor any enemies lurk that shall mar and rob us; but may He Who goeth before us be with us there, and may our road never be a solitary one, because the Master is with us, and the Breaker and the Pathfinder has gone up before us.

We pray Thee to bless us day by day. We pray Thee to bless us now, to take away all deadness and all coldness from our hearts and minds, and to help us in this hour of apparent worship, that the communion between us and Thee may be real and living, and that we may go hence in some measure strengthened and helped for Thy holy will and for our day's service.

Whilst we thank Thee for Thy mercies we would pray Thee to be near all who are in any kind of sorrow or trouble. Some amongst us have brought into Thy house very heavy hearts, perplexed and saddened some by difficulties, sorrows, and losses. We beseech Thee that whatever tribulations Thou mayest be exercising Thy children with, it may afterward yield the peaceable fruit of righteousness; and may none of us waste our sorrows, and not find them bringing us nearer to Thee, and making Thee more precious to us.

We pray Thee to bless all Thy people who in any fashion are trying to do Thy will in the world to make known Thy great Name. Bless all teachers and preachers, all guides and leaders of thought and influence in this and other lands; and grant that the travail of soul by which many are exercised may end in bringing many nearer to the one Light of all our

seeing, and may scatter the darkness that prevails. Rule Thou, O Lord, amidst the perturbations of the nations and the shocks of change. And grant, we beseech Thee, that whatsoever things may be shaken and removed, the established Kingdom may be more manifest, more widely spread, more mightily operative on the hearts of individuals, and on the counsels of the kingdoms.

We pray Thee to hear us, to bless and accept, and to forgive all our sins, for our Saviour Jesus Christ's sake.

CXIV

O LORD our God, Who desirest truth in the inward parts, give us what Thou desirest, and help us that we may draw near with true hearts, and in full assurance. We would bring the sacrifice which Thou dost not despise, and acknowledge before Thee with lowly minds our own evil which Thou knowest better than we can tell, but which it is good for us to spread before Thee. We thank Thee that we need do so with no disturbing fear. Set free therefrom, we would think of our own transgressions and sins rather than of their consequences, and seek to lay these in Thy holy Presence, that Thy pure eye may purge away what we would try to hide, and may make us what we sometimes desire to be, holy as our Father in Heaven is holy.

Thou seest how closely our evils twine themselves around our very being, and how they rule and tyrannise over us. And we come to ask Thee to wash us thoroughly from our iniquity, and cleanse us from our sin. May Thy holy Spirit, Thy free Spirit, Thy strong

Spirit, Thy right Spirit, be given to us, we pray Thee ; and therein may we find more fully, and possess more purely and continually, the joy of Thy salvation, and the consciousness of the light of Thy countenance resting upon us.

We thank Thee that Thou dost help all who wait upon Thee ; and we pray for Divine power to reinforce our weakness, and for Thy grace which makes holy, to cast out from us all our sins. Baptize us, we pray Thee, in the Holy Ghost and in fire. May the rushing mighty wind bring life into our beings ; may the dew of Thy sweet influence refresh our parched spirits. Anoint us, we beseech Thee, with unction from the Holy One. May we have that oil in our vessels with our lamps. May we be prepared thereby, by Thy Divine anointing, for service as prophets, priests, and kings ; to declare Thy Name, to bring Thee to men, and men to Thee ; and to rule over the Kingdom within, and to be lords of all things.

We thank Thee for Thy great and gracious promises to us ; we beseech Thee that we may never close our hearts against the influences, so widespread, and so entirely revivifying, which Thou dost give in Jesus Christ Thy Son. We thank Thee for that gift of a Divine Spirit ; we pray that it in our hearts may help our infirmities, and may teach and guide us into all truth. Hear us in these our prayers. We thank Thee for all Thy benefits towards us ; we would not forget the least, the most outward and fleeting of these ; for surely in Thy hands our breath is, and Thine are all our ways. Surely every good and perfect gift, both of the things which perish with the using, and of the things which grow by use, cometh from the Father of lights.

We praise Thee for Thy mercy, and we pray that the assurance of Thine unchangeable nature as the giving God, Who knoweth what things we have need of, and will never give us stones for bread, may ever hearten us in all the difficulties and perplexities, the trials and the wearinesses, the disappointments and the losses, the heavy tasks and the heavier sorrow which make up so much of our earthly lives. The Lord be praised! the Lord be trusted! The Lord be recognised in, and thanked for, all that befalls us.

Hear us; pardon our many sins, O Lord! Grant us deliverance therefrom, and knit us to Thyself, in bonds that cannot be broken; through Jesus Christ our Lord and Saviour.

CXV

O LORD our God! Thou hast not called us to uncleanness but unto holiness. And we thank Thee for that free Spirit which brings liberty wherever it comes. May we stand fast in the liberty wherewith Christ hath made us free, and be entangled by no yoke of bondage, whether imposed by men or sought to be fastened upon us by our own evil selves. Give us liberty to love, to serve, to grow like Thee; give us liberty to walk at large, knowing no restraints because we love the bonds with which Thou hast bound us. Help us that our wills and our inclinations may ever coincide with Thy will and Thy commandments, and in our natures may the fruits of the Spirit abundantly be found.

We pray for love, peace, joy, righteousness, and all the graces with which Thou art so willing to adorn our spirits. And whilst we thus ask, we beseech Thee that our daily efforts may coincide with our prayers and with our lives too—in dependence upon Thee, and in

lofty estimation of the best things; may be prayers that Thou wouldst bestow upon us the good things which Thou knowest how to give, and especially that Holy Spirit which they who believe on Christ shall receive. May we thereby have the Spirit of adoption, the Spirit of supplication, the Spirit of wisdom, the Spirit of burning, the Spirit of power, the Spirit of love and of a sound mind, and may we be kept from the lusts of the flesh.

Grant us Thy gracious presence and blessing as we remain here, seeking in outward form, at all events, Thy face. And grant that our inmost desires may correspond with our outward engagements; and we be not feeling after Thee if haply we may find Thee, but going straight to Thee because we know where Thou art, and are sure that they who seek Thee earnestly shall find Thee.

Give us Thy gracious presence, O Lord; speak to us, speak in us. May the word of the Lord be glorified among us. May Thy message be felt by each of us to be with power, and to be directed to us individually. May we be helped by our service of to-day to live more as those ought to do who have such great things given, and yet greater things promised from Thy full store.

We commend one another to Thy care. We pray Thee to comfort and solace any in special need of Thy sustaining, consoling influences. We commend one another, in all the variety of our callings and characters, to Thy gracious care; and beseech Thee that for each of us life may be the means of leading us on to that which is better than life, and which endures and persists through, and after, the death of the outward life.

Graciously be with us as we worship; accept us and answer us, through Jesus Christ our Saviour-Lord.

CXVI

O LORD! truly Thou art our Light and our Salvation. Help us, we beseech Thee, to walk in the light, and to hold fast by the salvation, that nothing may alarm and nothing may hurt. We thank Thee for all the good cheer and strengthening of heart which Thou art ever giving to them that wait on Thee. And we beseech Thee that Thou wouldst so move upon and influence our too often wayward and wandering hearts that with still confidence we may wait upon Thee, and with patient hope may expect Thee in the darkness, and with happy love may find Thee as evermore our Light.

Draw near to us, O Lord! we beseech Thee, and pour out the spirit of grace and of supplication upon all of us gathered before Thee. From many diverse homes and circumstances we have come. Thy wise providence appoints to us different and often contrasted paths; but whether Thou hast been making us to feel the joy or the insufficiency of earthly good; whether our recent road has led through the valley of the shadow of death, or green pastures, or by still waters; whether we bring to Thee songs or sobs, we beseech Thee that we may be able to sing 'of mercy and of judgment,' and to bless the Lord our God for all the way by which He has led us.

Teach us to understand the loving-kindness of the Lord by patient and believing observance of the Lord's ways; and may we never be brought to a stand, or perplexity, or robbed of our faith by any incidence of

sorrow upon our lives. May we never be drawn away from Thee by the brightness of Thy gifts. Be Thou with us in the darkness, the Pillar of Fire ; in the sunshine of worldly prosperity and happiness the Pillar of Cloud to temper the deceitful ray. And help us out of both to bring the treasure which Thou dost lay up for Thy children in both, even that we may become partakers of Thy holiness, and have our characters and our spirits moulded more and more into the noble likeness of Thy dear Son.

Grant, O Lord, that we may be workers with Thee in that great work, pursued by all Thy providence. And since Thou hast 'wrought us for the self-same thing,' may we not resist Thy working nor murmur at any of its accompaniments ; but always feel that the pleasure of the Lord is being wrought out in our characters, and that we are lovingly, gratefully, submissively, yielding ourselves to the Master's hand.

O Lord ! lift away from every heart here every oppression, and every hindrance. And help us all to enter into the whole blessedness, and power, and sweetness of this service. Thou hast put the treasure in earthen vessels. May our weakness not hinder its working. We pray that passing beyond all external and human agencies, we may each of us be brought into fellowship and touch with Thyself ; and hear the deep Voice that speaks to us through all events, and more clearly through such ordinances as these, and bids us to come up nearer to Thyself.

O Lord ! help us to-day in our worship. Thou knowest our inadequacy for such service ; Thou knowest how unfit we are to gather up into one utterance the desires and the needs of Thy people, and how unfit to handle the sacred Word of God. But we

pray that all imperfection, all unworthiness of motive, and double aim may be taken away from them that speak in Thy Name this day; and that upon many congregations of waiting men there may descend the fulness of Thy Divine Spirit, and influences may begin which shall persist through many days, and blend with others in our souls to make us liker Thee.

Hear us, we beseech Thee, in these petitions; grant us Thy gracious presence, and accept and forgive now, through Jesus Christ our Lord.

CXVII

O LORD our Father, help us, we beseech Thee, that we may indeed withdraw our trust from all crumbling uncertainties, and fix them upon the living God Who giveth all things richly to enjoy. We beseech Thee to make us more and more rich and content in the possession of Thyself. May it be true of us that for mind and heart and will and life Thou art our Portion; the strength of our hearts, and the aim and treasure of our lives.

O Lord! we have to confess our wandering, many shortcomings, terrible gaps between our ideal and the reality. We know so much better than we do. We desire, sometimes, so much more nobly than we habitually aim. We forget Thee in the midst of Thy good things, in the midst of the duties that Thou dost appoint, in the midst of the cares and perplexities which we often pull down upon our own heads. We pray Thee to help us to simpler lives, to a more complete and persistent faith in Thee, running through all our days, and making the weakest of us as an angel of God. Help us in our daily life to set the Lord always

before us; and with that light before our eyes may we not walk in darkness.

O Lord! have pity upon our imperfections; speak Thy word through us, even us, O Lord! that its great power may vindicate itself, and our hearts may yield to Thy message. Guide us in the paths of daily duty and conflict, and may the things seen and temporal help us towards the unseen and eternal. We pray for all the weary and the sad, the lonely and the stricken hearts among us; that Thy sweet presence may steal into desolate souls; that bowing to Thy holy will we may be enriched with Thy perfect peace. We pray for all who are seeking to do Thy will in the world, and to make other men know and love the King and His law. And we beseech Thee that through the nations of the earth that holy and sweet power may flow which shall turn the weapons of war into the instruments of peaceful service and fruit-bearing toil.

Grant us Thy blessing in our hour of worship, O Lord, we pray, through Jesus Christ our Lord and Saviour.

CXVIII

ALMIGHTY God! it is Thou that hast made us, and we are Thine. Help us, we beseech Thee, to yield ourselves to Thee in lowly trust and lofty aspiration; and may we ever dwell very near Thee, and carry our thoughts of Thy grace and power, of Thy tenderness and fatherhood, into all our common deeds. We thank Thee for that mighty Name that standeth fast for ever, the name of Righteousness and Love, of Wisdom and of Power. May we know Thy Name, and put our trust in Thee.

Look upon us this evening. Shed abroad upon us

that mighty Spirit which shall voice all our thoughts and desires into one, and dwelling in our hearts shall be the pledge of acceptance and of peace. Help us to wait before Thee. Send us help according to our different necessities. All our sins forgive, and cleanse away; and help us in very deed this evening to listen to God's voice, and to hear Him speak, even through human lips.

We beseech Thee to hear us, to give us Thy blessing and presence as we wait before Thee now, and to accept and answer us, in Christ our Lord.

CXIX

O LORD! Infinite Love, Fountain of all good, Rock of Ages, Thou Home of our hearts, and Friend of all. Help us to draw near to Thee now with true hearts, and not only in this outward form of worship, but may our thoughts be set free from low and earthly cares; and our joys and our sorrows, our circumstances and our duties, impel us towards Thyself, and not hinder us from drawing near to Thee.

We thank Thee, O Lord, for the firm assurance which we all may have of Thy fatherly heart, of Thy changeless goodness, of the infinite wisdom and tenderness of all Thy purposes towards us. And we beseech Thee that the strength-giving and ennobling assurances that we are in amity with Thee, and compassed about by Thee, for our blessedness and defence, may enter into every part of our lives, and may satisfy every part of our natures, and make us possessors indeed of God.

O Lord! we come to Thee now to claim our portion in that great and free forgiveness which frankly

pardons great or small sin. And we beseech Thee that we may understand ourselves so as to know that whatever may have been the outward purity and righteousness of our lives, we belong to those who have much forgiven. When we think of our own inward nature, of our wandering and wayward wills, of our many rebellions against Thee, of the selfishness which has covered so much of our lives, of the negligence and slothfulness towards things that are good, of the feeble resolutions so often broken almost as soon as made, of the gulf between what we ought and what we would do, and of all the manifold acts of weakness and unworthiness which even men can see in us, and we ourselves can see, we would bow ourselves before Thee, and acknowledge the greatness of our transgressions. Then we would stretch out the hand of faith to lay hold on the greater greatness of Thy pardoning mercy. Our iniquities are more than the hairs of our head, but Thy thoughts which are to us-ward, and are all thoughts of goodness and mercy, are more even than they. So we dare to look up, and we come to Thee, O Lord, in the assurance that Thou art glad to welcome back Thy wandering children, and art ready to give us of the richest gifts which it is possible for us to receive.

We pray that Thy good Spirit may be with us in our service of this evening. Thou knowest how unfit we are to speak to our brethren gathered here. But we pray that Thou wouldst help, that Thou wouldst teach and inspire, that Thou wouldst give thoughts and words, that Thou wouldst carry Thy truth to the hearts and consciences of all of us that hear; and we pray, Lord! that some wandering child of Thine may be brought back this evening, and that some of us who

have seen no beauty in Jesus Christ that we should desire Him may learn that He is the altogether lovely, and the Pearl of great price.

Bless our meeting together, O Lord; and whatever other purposes it may serve or fail to attain, may there be set forth amongst us the glory of Christ's Name, and the power of His Cross. We thank Thee for all Thy loving-kindness and tender care over us. We pray for one another, and beseech Thee that Thou wouldst be near each of us, according to our different necessities and characters. Thou hast laid Thy hand heavily upon some of us. There are some sad hearts here this evening. We beseech Thee to be very tender and gracious to such. Some wounds can only be bound up by Thy gentle hand, but we bless Thee that bandage and balm are with Thee. And we pray that Thou wouldst come near any of us that are sad and weary, perplexed and lonely, desolate or forsaken, and be to each of us that which we most need, whether it is that which we most desire or no.

And now, Lord, we desire to commend ourselves to Thy gracious care, and humbly renew our petitions for Thy help and blessing in our worship, and offer our sacrifices of praise and thanksgiving, of loving hearts and trusting, through Jesus Christ our Saviour-Lord.

CXX

WE come to Thee, O Lord our Father, to plead with Thee that Thou wouldst remember Thy loving-kindnesses and Thy tender mercies which have been ever of old, and wouldst still manifest Thyself to us in our daily lives and in our inmost spirits as being what indeed Thou art, our Portion and our Life.

We thank Thee for that unceasing stream of light and love which flows from Thee unto all Thy universe. And we beseech Thee that since Thou hast in Thy loving-kindness made us capable of receiving Thy best gifts, Thou wouldst, as a faithful Creator, supply the needs which Thou hast given to us, and fill us with Thyself. Thou art good and upright. We come before Thee darkened with many evils, and conscious of not a few transgressions ; but we bless Thee that Thou hast taught us to plead with Thee the very greatness of our transgressions as a reason for Thy dealing with them. Pardon our iniquity, for it is great ; too great for us or for any power but Thine to deal with. And the greater it is the more the glory to Thy Name if we are delivered therefrom. Good and upright is the Lord.

We bless Thee that Thou hast taught us to say therefore will He guide sinners in the way. For surely Thy goodness has no greater delight, and no nobler field on which to manifest itself, than to make us, in our measure and degree, partakers of that uprightness. So, Lord ! we come to Thee with full confidence, falling back upon Thy Name when coldness, or fears, or indifference to conduct and character may seize us ; and beseech Thee that Thou wouldst help us to walk in Thy ways, and find that all the paths of the Lord are mercy and truth to them that keep His commandments.

Regard us as we have gathered ourselves this morning, we hope in obedience to Thy command, not merely in conformity with a custom. We beseech Thee that each of us here, bringing Christ with us, may find Him in the midst of us. We would gather in Thy Name, in His Name, which is Thine, and beseech Thee that Thy promised presence, with all its quickening,

gladdening, emancipating influences, may be bestowed upon each of us. Help us to leave cares and sorrows and joys and work behind us, or to bring these with us only in so far as they may make us more earnest in our desire to receive the needful blessings from Thyself. We thank Thee for all the aid given to our sluggish faith by outward forms and means this morning; and we beseech Thee that we may be led through them, and beyond them, and be brought, each of us, into Thy own presence, wherein all outward forms and means shall drop away and be forgotten, and the spirit of a man be joined to the Spirit of God.

O Lord! help us in our worship; guide all our thoughts; grant us clear visions of Thyself and of Thy truth; lead us into holy aspirations, sane estimates of our own past and of ourselves. Help us to look above the things that so often engross us in our daily lives, and put our whole selves into Thy loving hands. May we find not only peace but inflowing power and blessedness that shall enrich and enlarge our hearts.

We pray Thee to be near us according to our necessity, to accept our thanks for all Thy great mercies to us, and to help us that if in our remembrances or in our present circumstances there blend plain and manifest blessings with blessings thickly veiled, Thou wouldst give us the clear sight to see behind the veil the Angel face, and so to sing of mercy and of judgment, and to thank Thee for all the way by which the Lord our God has led us. Thou knowest it is very hard for some of us to do that, but we bless Thee that Thou dost help us wisely to look back upon our past, and here and now to praise Thy Name for it altogether.

We beseech Thee to hear us, to bless and keep us, to forgive and answer, through Jesus Christ our Lord and Saviour.

CXXI

HELP and strengthen us, O Lord, we beseech Thee, for the race that is set before us ; and may we have the mind that was in Christ, and by His strength may our feeble feet be quickened, and grace given to us to run, not uncertainly, and to run so that we obtain.

O Lord ! we need Thy help at every moment. Life is often very hard ; it is always full of effort, and sometimes full of dangers and sorrows ; and we need Thee to be beside us, and we need to keep beside Thee, when we wander away from Thee, and forget Thee, and try to do our work in our own strength, and fail to keep before us the great quickening impulse, and to grasp the great enabling power of Thy Holy Spirit. But we beseech Thee that day by day, Thou wouldst be near us, to keep us that whether it be Thy commandment that we should walk in the minutest recurrence of small duties and commonplace events, or whether it should be Thy will that we have to run in the crises of trials and difficulties and sorrows, we may have Thee to help us. Make our feet as hinds' feet ; by Thy grace may we run and not be weary, and walk and not faint.

We pray Thee, O Lord, to help to make our worship real, to deliver us from dependence upon these external means, and yet to enable us to get all the good out of them to the last drop that is in them. Guide us in hearing and in speaking what purports to be Thy word. May it be so really, and whatever human element and alloy must necessarily be mixed with it, do Thou clear it, and let the pure gold of Thy revealed will and

manifest commandment enter into all our spirits and enrich us. May we live our convictions more as we learn. And what we feel in our worship here may it issue in action in our daily life. May there be none of us who, knowing these things, are so miserable as not to do them.

We beseech Thee to help and bless each of us according to our different circumstances in the present, and our different characters and spiritual needs. Comfort all sad hearts among us. Be very near to all solitary souls; stay all who may be reeling before temptations, or all but cast down by sorrows. Guide any that are perplexed. Deliver us each from the errors which we do not know, and from the sins which we have never seen. And do Thou help us in our daily lives to avoid many a temptation because we press toward the mark, and to be kept from undue disturbance because we set the Lord always before us, and so shall not be greatly moved.

Graciously grant us Thy help and presence, we beseech Thee, for our Lord and Saviour's sake.

CXXII

MANY, O Lord our God, are Thy wonderful works which Thou hast done, and Thy thoughts which are to usward. We bless Thee that just because we are poor and needy the Lord thinketh upon us. We come to Thee, this morning, with the lowly and yet trustful hearts which become us; and whilst on the one hand we think of the manifold transgressions which are ours, on the other we would lose these sad thoughts in those of the yet more manifold mercies which are Thine. Blessed be Thy Name! Thou art our Refuge

from ourselves, and yet we know ourselves best in our weakness and our need, in our meanness and evil, in the lurking faults which sometimes we can see, and which often rule us in the dark; we think most of Thee, and bless Thee that we can turn to Thee from all our evil, and pray Thee to purge us, to cleanse us wholly, to deliver us from all iniquity, to make us pure, and to strengthen us to keep that holy commandment which is also a most blessed promise, and to be holy as Thou art holy.

O Lord! we draw near to Thee now, humbly thanking Thee for Thy many mercies to us, for the daily blessings of our lot, for all the benefits which Thou dost scatter along our paths, and which ought to speak to our hearts and make us very trustful and peaceful.

We beseech Thee that we may understand the loving-kindness of the Lord more than we have done, and may be strengthened to apprehend the gracious meaning in all that befalls us. O that we were able to look more on the things seen and temporal as Thou dost see them, and to use them more as Thou dost mean us to employ them, as helps, whatever their character, to know Thee better, and to possess Thee more fully. We ask that we may be taught the meaning of the small and the great things in our daily lives, that we may bring them all increasingly into contact with Thyself, that whatever we do we may do as to the Lord, and then we shall do it heartily; and that whilst all other lower motives, powerful and good in their places, do influence and spur us, we may be stirred most of all, and 'labour that whether present or absent we may be well-pleasing to Thee.'

We thank Thee that Thou hast gathered us together this morning, and whilst we are conscious of the many

unfitnesses in our wandering minds and slothful spirits, and feel how hard it is to use even these outward forms which Thou hast mercifully appointed whereby we may rise to Thee, yet beseeching Thee that having given us the means Thou wouldst help us to employ them to the end; and pass, by aid of communion with one another, and the outward forms of worship, into the secret silences of the presence of the Most High, and feel that we are with Thee.

We pray for Thy pardoning mercy, for Thy quickening and cleansing grace, for that ennobling and emancipating spirit which Thou hast promised to all them that believingly wait upon Thee; and we beseech Thee that more and more all of us may be conscious of a Power mightier than ourselves, and holier than our hearts, dwelling within us, and sanctifying our hearts.

We beseech Thee to hear us as we come to Thee now, to forgive all our shortcomings, and take away anything that may stand in the way of our full entrance into the blessed privilege of Thy sanctuary. May we have fellowship with the Father and with the Son, through the Divine Spirit. Hear us, for our Lord Christ's sake, we pray Thee.

CXXIII

MAY we, O Lord, experience, and gladly submit to, that mighty working whereby Christ is able to subdue all things, even our wayward and rebellious hearts, unto Himself. Help us that, forgetting the things that are behind, and reaching forth unto the things that are before, we may press toward the mark; and as our souls follow hard after Thee may Thy right hand uphold us, and may we know ourselves in-

creasingly to be sustained and impelled, as well as guided or directed by Thyself.

Thus, O Lord, we beseech Thee, be near us for all needful acts of self-surrender and self-denial. May our estimate of things be plain and Christ-like, and so may we seek the best things first, and look upon all lesser good as best, by reason of its helping us to the possession of our true treasure. Strengthen us, we pray Thee, thus to handle the things seen and temporal, so that not only we may not finally lose but may daily, more completely possess, the things that are unseen and eternal.

We thank Thee for this morning's opportunity of drawing near to Thee thus, and blessing Thee that our single and separate weaknesses gathered together may become strengths for each of us. We pray that Thou wouldst help us in all our worship, and take away anything in mind, body, or estate, which may interfere with our joyful and believing worship now. May we rise to communion with Thyself, and whatever there may be in our lives, in our characters, in our circumstances which might mar the completeness and the peacefulness of our speech with God, and of His to us, may these things be all swept away. Use us as Thy vehicles and messengers; and grant, O Lord, we pray Thee, that none of us may turn a deaf ear to what God is saying to our souls and consciences.

We pray for one another, in all the variety of our condition. Comfort the sad hearts among us. Be very near to those who may be lonely and cast down. Breathe Thy grace which sustains and brings gladness even in darkness into all suffering, troubled souls. And grant, we beseech Thee, that the issue of every trial, great or small, which we meet with on our

earthly course, may be to prepare us more and more for the inheritance of the saints in light. And from all of them may we hear the great Voice that says 'Come up hither.' We thank Thee that there is changeless blessedness and peace and power; and we beseech Thee that we may not live down here, amongst the troubles and the cares and the changes, but have our lives hid with Christ in God.

O Lord! bless all whom we should remember before Thee. Specially we plead that Thou wouldst watch over our countrymen in peril of their lives, or facing the cruelties of heathen lands. We ask that if it be Thy will Thou wouldst restrain the wrath of men, that Thou wouldst make the remainder thereof to praise Thee. We stand silent before the awful sorrows which riot through the world rampant, and beseech Thee that Thou wouldst give us grace to trust in the darkness; and that Thou wouldst, in Thine own time, and in such measure as Thou seest to be best for Thy people, show us some gleams of light in the darkness that we may discern at least the beginnings of the fulfilment of the great promise that the kingdoms of this world shall be the Kingdom of our God and of His Christ.

The world waits, O Lord, and Thy saints cry to Thee. Make bare Thine arm and crush the evil. Now we pray Thee to hear us, to accept us in Thy mercy, and to grant us Thy blessing in our hour of service; through Jesus Christ our Saviour-Lord.

CXXIV

WITH thankful love, O Lord, and lowly hearts we would come into Thy presence, and bless Thee that we

can do so with confidence and children's dispositions. Thou art our Father, though we have been but prodigal children. Our transgressions are many; blessed be Thy name! Thy mercies are more than they. Our hearts fail us, so that we cannot look up; but Thou hast opened our eyes to see how much stronger Thou art than our sin, and how Thy love is not turned away even by transgressions multiplied seventy times seven. And so we would put away all our fears with them, and ask Thee not that we may be delivered from the consciousness of our unworthiness, but that it may be deepened, if only there always go with it, and triumph over it, the assurance of Thy continual rescuing and cleansing life. We would not forget our sin. It is good for us to remember it for warning, for humility, for the larger and more wondering apprehension of Thy great mercy which persists through it all. We would not forget our sin, but we pray that it may never come between us and Thee. We ask that we may not lose consciousness of it, and so sink into foolish self-complacency or stolid indifference as to whether we are right or wrong, good or evil; but we pray that it may never haunt and harass, but may ever pass into the loving contemplation of that great mercy which blotteth out our sins as a cloud, and as a thick cloud our transgressions.

Look upon us this morning, O Lord! We have brought many hindrances along with us, and we feel these most when we try to rise toward Thee. But we beseech Thee that nothing within us, and nothing around us, may draw us away from Thee, or impede our rising towards Thee, being borne up by faith and love.

Help us, we pray Thee, to approach Thee now with

glad and grateful hearts, making mention of Thy great mercies to us, and wisely including in the list of Thy mercies our sorrows, pains, and losses. We thank Thee for all the way by which Thou hast led us; surely the diverse workings of Thy hand have one uniform purpose; and through summer and winter, storm and calm, Thou dost seek for the ripening of the seed of the Kingdom in all our natures and characters.

We pray that we may estimate our daily circumstances as Thou dost judge them; and use them all, of whatever complexion they are, for the one purpose for which life as a whole, and in each of its moments and details, is given to us, that we may be partakers of Thy holiness. Deliver us thus, we pray Thee, O Lord, keeping in view the supreme end for which we are here, from many short-sighted murmurings and mournings, from much perplexed wondering at Thy dark providences, either as regards ourselves or as regards others; and help us to live in the sunshine of Thy face, whatever there may be of weather round about us.

We pray Thee to accept our thanks for all Thy great mercies to us day by day. We pray Thee to deepen in us the consciousness of our peaceful dependence upon Thee; and of our strenuous endeavour to please Thee. May we carry into all our lives, in their small as in their great moments, the sense of Thy presence, and the wish to order our conversation so as to please Thee; and in whatever we do may we set the Lord always before us, and whatever comes may we not be greatly moved.

We thank Thee that Thou hast gathered us together this morning thus. We pray for Thy gracious presence and help as we wait before Thee now. We bring Thee our thanks for those great gifts of Thy love

which this day brings to our mind; and we beseech Thee that we may be partakers of the power of Christ's Resurrection, and dying indeed unto sin may we live unto God; and being raised from the dead with Him may 'even now with Him sit together in heavenly places' at the right hand of God.

Help us, we beseech Thee, in our worship; pardon all our shortcomings and sins; accept and bless us as we draw near to Thee now, through Jesus Christ our Lord and Saviour.

CXXV

O LORD our God, we thank Thee that Thou hast given unto us all things that pertain unto salvation and godliness, which is the best life. We beseech Thee that we may not receive the gift of God in vain, but giving all diligence may add to our faith whatsoever excellent things are within the compass of humanity, and so be made fit to have an abundant entrance ministered unto us into Thy everlasting kingdom and glory.

Help us, O Lord, day by day to labour 'that, whether present or absent, we may be well pleasing' to Thee, and to Thy Son, our Lord. Teach us all the things in which we may yet be deficient, and shew us where we go astray from Thy commandments, or misunderstand Thy will, either in matters of opinion or of action. Help us to seek, day by day, honestly and earnestly, to bring into our daily lives all which we know of Thy holy will, and to make all that we believe the guides of all that we do. May there be no faith in us which does not work. May there be no works in us which are not of faith. May we press nearer to Jesus Christ,

and in the depths of our spirits come into closer union with Him, so that we may more lovingly divine His will, and more swiftly apprehend all that is pleasing in His sight. And do Thou strengthen our weak hands to bring into practice all which Thy grace teaches us of Thy will, Thy nature, and our duty.

Help us in our worship now ; guide us when we speak some poor words in Thy name. May they have the power of God in them, whatever else they may lack ; and do Thou grant that in hearing we may listen as those who hear God speak, and may have grace given us to discern between the imperfections of the human vehicle and the perfectness of the Word that it brings.

And help each of us, when we go hence, to carry with us in our hearts, and to bring to bear in our lives, to-morrow and thereafter, the lessons of Thy word ; and to carry out the resolutions of the moment, and true to the impressions that may be made upon us. And do Thou help each of us, in all the variety of our present condition. Some of us in Thy sight are sad and weary, lonely and perplexed, suffering in the manifold ways in which Thy wisdom makes men feel pain and weariness and loss. We would bless Thee for the discipline, and beseech Thee that we may neither faint when we are rebuked of Thee nor despise Thy chastisements. Give us grace to profit by all that befalls us, and a happy issue out of all our troubles ; the one happy issue being that they waft us nearer to Thyself.

Bless all Christian people this day, O Lord, who are gathered as we are now in every land, in every name, in every church. Wherever there are hearts that feel after Thee and love Thee, though they be separated from all the communions of Thy people, and though

they may be encompassed with many errors and darkness, we beseech Thee to be near such; and guide all seeking souls to the Light, and help them to rejoice in Thyself.

We pray that Thou wouldst stretch out Thy mighty arm, and subdue the tumults of the nations. Break the axe of the oppressor, and deliver Thy servants in distant lands who may be in peril of their lives for the Master's sake. Whatever disasters and changes sweep over this troubled world may they be as the winter storms that proclaim the coming of the spring, and will end in the abundant harvest.

We beseech Thee to take our thoughts and words into Thy special care now. Keep us from marring the glory and sublimity of Thy great word by our inadequate handling of it. Draw near us, bless, and forgive for our Lord Jesus Christ's sake.

CXXVI

LORD, Thou hast been our dwelling-place in all generations. Help us! that we may indeed abide in the secret place of the Most High, and so ever be at rest, and safe beneath the shadow of the Almighty. We would make Thee our refuge; we would flee from ourselves, from vanity, from all the cares and sorrows, and even from the brightnesses and the joys of this fleeting show, to Thyself, Who art, while these things only seem to be.

We bless Thee for the unseen and eternal dwelling-place of spirits; and ask that Thou wouldst help us not to make this world, or anything in it that passeth away, the anchorage, the refuge, the home of our hearts. Teach us, we pray Thee, how to set our love

upon Thee, and then fulfil Thy promise of delivering. Teach us how to know Thy Name which Thou hast so fully made known to us, and which yet we are so ignorant of; and then do Thou fulfil Thy promise of setting us by that knowledge on high above whatever can pass or change or die. May we be Thine, and then, whatever be the length of our days, we shall be satisfied; and whatever else Thou mayest hide from us Thou wilt show us Thy salvation.

We come to Thee now, with humble thanksgivings for Thy manifold mercies to us, and bless and praise Thee for all Thy good gifts. Truly we can say that we are ransomed and healed, restored and forgiven; that our inmost hearts may melt and flow forth in lives of service, of blessed communion, of ennobling and emancipating obedience; and that we may glorify God, the Redeemer and Father of our spirits. For all Thy blessings to us we desire to praise Thee, and beseech Thee that Thou wouldst help us, now and here in Thy presence, to draw ever near to Thyself, and hold true communion with Thee, wherein is our rest and peace. Cleanse our hearts from vanity, turn away our eyes from beholding folly. Keep our hearts from all crooked ways. Help us to walk in the light, as Thou art in the light, and so walking to follow and come to the light.

We beseech Thee for Thy blessing to rest upon us gathered here this morning. We thank Thee for all the mercies and good gifts which some of us have received, in many years gone by, in this place. And now that Thou hast brought us together again, we pray that the days to come may yet be more fruitful and blessed than the days that are past; and that Thou wouldst manifest Thy great power and presence with

us, whensoever we assemble together thus, forgiving and healing and quickening all that is good in us, by our gathering together with one accord in this place. And help us in speaking Thy will, and in hearing Thy word.

Accept us now, O Lord, we beseech Thee, by Thy mercy upon us, for our hope is in Thee, and Thy mercy must come to us, and our hope must clasp Thee, through Jesus Christ our Lord and Saviour.

CXXVII

O LORD, our gracious Father, we come to Thee remembering all the work and graciousness of Thy Son our Brother, and blessing Thee for all the consolation that steals into troubled hearts, and for all the truth that is infused into weak spirits when we remember, in the midst of our temptations, the merciful and faithful High Priest Who is able to succour them that are tempted. May we, in our various paths of life, beset as we are with different dangers and snares, find the one solace and the one source of strength more than sufficient for all our need. In the sign of Christ's Cross may we conquer, and find there not only the ground of our hope but the pattern of our lives.

We beseech Thee to strengthen and bless us, day by day, and to enable us, with increasing certitude and constancy, to lay hold upon that Lord Who has taken our nature, and has become one of us, that we may become like unto Him. Go with us, we pray Thee, in Christ Thy Son and that comforting communion of the Holy Spirit which comes from Him, with each of us, in all the variety of our circumstances, conditions, temptations, and conse-

quent necessities. We bless Thee that Thou dost send none of us a warfare at our own charges. We thank Thee for the strength that comes in obedience, and we pray for strength for obedience; and beseech Thee that Thou wouldst help us to be lords of ourselves, to govern passions and inclinations and desires, to bring every thought into subjection, and to lay our whole selves, with all that we have and desire and do, upon Thine altar. Unworthy we are, but we bless Thee that that altar sanctifies the giver and the gift. And we pray for grace to live lives yielded in will and in heart and desire and thought to Thyself. So shall we possess ourselves. We beseech Thee that it may be so increasingly with every one of us.

And now, O Lord, we desire to commend to Thee others who are in our hearts. We pray for all the sad and the sorrowful, for all the weary and the solitary, for any amongst us who may be bearing the burden of suspense and fear, or who may have had suspense and fear resolved into settled sadness and sure loss.

O Lord! draw near to any of us who may, in any special manner, need Thy help, and that Thou wouldst be with all Thy people who may be in weakness and suffering of body or of mind. Thou art the Physician, Thou canst heal. We commend all Thy servants on sick beds, and those that are watching by them, to Thy gracious care.

We pray for our Sovereign and our country at this time. Guide the thoughts of men, and the counsels of the nations, in such ways as may most speedily and effectually bring about that Kingdom in which alone the unrest and the perplexity of nations shall be guided and solved. We pray especially for Thy missionary servants in distant lands, in peril of their

lives. We pray that Thou wouldst sustain and solace their loved ones at home, who may have been called upon to part with dear ones. And we beseech Thee that the blood of the martyrs may be the seed of the Church, and that all these perturbations may be but as the shaking of the things that are made; that the things which cannot be shaken may remain, and the kingdom that cannot be moved may emerge from the confusion and the overthrow. Hear us; grant us Thy blessing as we worship here before Thee, and accept and answer us, in Christ our Saviour.

CXXVIII

HELP us, O Lord, we beseech Thee, to praise, for surely Thou art willing to breathe desires into our hearts, and to quicken in us all that which is ready to perish. We would turn ourselves to Thee this morning, and bless Thee that in the midst of the vocations of daily life, and all the struggles and perplexities and pressing difficulties devolving upon us, we have this day of the Lord, which makes it easier for us, even by the weight of outward things, to rise to communion with Thyself. These outward things are so often against us that we thank Thee if, for once in the week, they are for us. And we pray that Thou wouldst help us rightly to use the associations of this place and the forms of worship, and so to rise beyond these, and individually to come into the secret place of the Most High.

Lord! help us everywhere, so weak that the very means which Thou hast mercifully granted and appointed, by which sense may aid spirit, are too often made by us the end, and by them spirit is weakened instead of strengthened. May we worship Thee to-day

in spirit, whilst we do so in form; and may we find that the Lord is nigh unto them that call upon Him in truth. Thou dost open Thine hand, and dost satisfy the desires of every living thing. Surely Thou wilt not neglect the desires of living souls that turn to Thee for more abundant life.

We beseech thee to help us. Truly we need Thee, Lord! We need Thee to give, we need Thee to teach us to receive, we need Thee to answer and to inspire our prayers. And we pray that Thou wouldst help us now, giving to each of us our portion of that spirit of supplication which maketh intercession in us with unutterable desires.

O Lord! when we think of such words, and then are conscious of how poor, and how feeble, and how much smaller than the utterance of them our real desires after them often are, we do not wonder that we get few answers. But we pray Thee to help us this morning. May we break away from everything that fetters; may the frost of our hearts be melted by the Sun of Righteousness. May we rise above the things seen and temporal. May we apprehend our true good. May we covet earnestly the best things, and may we find that none who ask from Thee the good things which Thou knowest to be for our good are ever sent empty away.

Lord! we need Thy pardoning and Thy cleansing power. We ask and we hope, in some measure we desire, that our lives may be made more conformable to the example of our Master, and our inmost selves be brought into closer union with Him Who is the very life of our lives and the self of ourselves. To us may it more truly than ever it has been be Christ to live. And may all that we are and do be submitted to the obed-

ience of Christ. Help us in our daily lives to fight the good fight whatever shape it may take, and many different shapes it does take in our different lives. Arm us against our temptations. Make us clear-sighted to know what they are. Show us the things wherein, by nature or by circumstances, or indulged habits, we have become weakest. And do Thou build us the ruined walls, and help us to resist successfully. Enlighten us as to duty. May we see higher heights than we have ever seen. May we not shrink from climbing to any heights we see. May our consciences be made sensitive and swift and sure, and help us implicitly to follow. May we not condemn ourselves in anything that we allow ourselves. May we be taught the law of the Lord, and may that ever be our law.

We pray Thee to come near to us this morning, to help and bless us in our worship, to accept our thanks, and to continue to us such outward blessings as Thou knowest to be for our highest good. Make us willing to accept Thy will in regard to all outward things, the smaller, and in regard to all great and eternal things. Be Thy mercy upon us, according as our hope is in Thee. And make our hope greater and more assured and more firm, because Thou dost put our poor expectations to shame by the wealth of Thy answers. We pray Thee to hear, accept, and bless us, through our Lord Jesus Christ.

CXXIX

HELP us, O Lord, to draw near with true hearts, and in full assurance of faith. Cleanse us with the pure water of Thy ever-flowing Spirit that our spirits may be purged from all evil. We know that it is 'a fearful

thing to fall into the hands of the living God.' We thank Thee that it is a blessed thing to commit our spirits into Thy hands. And we would do so remembering that Thou dost redeem us, and that Thou art the Lord God of truth.

We beseech Thee that all of us here this morning may find the blessedness of putting ourselves, by the submission of our wills and the outgoings of our desires, into Thy gracious hands. Do Thou come to us as we may severally require, in the manifoldness of Thy great gifts, and bestow upon each of us that which we most need for the life of godliness. We thank Thee that however often and sorely we may err in the presentation of our necessities to Thee, Thou knowest Thy thoughts to usward which are for good and not for evil. And we would leave ourselves in Thy hands, and pray that Thou wouldst bestow upon us what we most need, whether it is what we most desire or no. Love and care for each of us, Lord! Give us Thyself, give us purer hearts, loftier desires, clearer insight into duty, more resolute purpose to perform it. Help us to live as Christ's followers and like our Master, and to follow the Lamb that was slain whithersoever He goeth.

We beseech Thee for Thy blessing now; forgive the imperfections of heart and mind. May we feel that the bonds of earth are somewhat slackened; that we may see the things which are, and the things which only appear, in truer proportion. We thank Thee that by these gatherings we are helped to set right our motions as to the relative importance of the present and the future, of the outward and the inward. We ask Thee to bless us with some illumination of spirit this morning, by which we shall discern the things that differ, and see the unseen and eternal in its magnitude and glory.

Bless each of us in all the variety of Thy providences with us and our characters and needs. Draw near to each heart, for Thou canst shape Thy message and Thy gifts so as to be that which each of us most requires; comfort where consolation is needed, enlightenment where illumination is sought, strength to obey and to run where weakness is felt, and for each of us the gift which is all gifts, the gift of Thy Holy Spirit and of Thy dear Son. We pray Thee to draw near, to forgive, and answer us, through Christ our Saviour-Lord.

CXXX

O LORD! we thank Thee that whilst we bow before Thy majesty we can think of Thy love. We thank Thee that we have learnt, may we never forget the lesson, that the Throne of God is the Throne of grace. Surely Thou dost delight to give; surely Thou dost delight to forgive. Surely Thy joy is in bending down to our lowliness and replenishing our emptiness, and cleansing our sinfulness and helping our helplessness. Strengthen us now to lift up the empty hands which Thou dost delight to fill, and to open the hearts which Thou dost delight to enter. Blessed be Thy Name! Thou art first in all things. Thou givest before we ask, and whilst we are yet speaking Thou dost hear. May the instantaneous answer of peace, and of felt truth, and loosening of the bonds of earth, come to each of us now. So may we be taught to accept greater things from God, and to pray with a firmer belief in the power of the answers of prayer.

We lift up our hearts to Thee now, O Lord, in humble thanksgiving. Truly we have to praise Thy Name which alone is excellent, Thy glory above the united

praises of Heaven and earth. We draw near to Thee and rejoice that we too can claim that through Jesus Christ we are brought nigh unto God. May we all find it so. And whatever may be the hindrances of our circumstances, or in our own weak hearts, of fellowship with Thyself, may all these hindrances be overcome, and for each of us this be what Thou dost intend it to be, an hour of true fellowship with God, when we shall be, in some measure, emancipated from the bonds of daily life, and lifted nearer to the Source of our true life.

We pray for Thy help, for Thy teaching, for the communication, through these outward services, of the greatest gifts of Thy love and spirit. May none of us draw near to Thee only in outward form, or thinking that we shall be heard for our much speaking, or caring not whether we are heard at all. But may we all, even here in our united aspect, enter into our closet, and shut to the door, and pray to our Father in secret. We bless Thee that both things may be true, that our worship now may be the gathered worship of Thy people, and the solitary flight of the single soul to the alone God. Strengthen us for the reception of Thy gifts, which Thou art more willing to bestow than we are to receive, and for the discharge of all the duties which Thy loving hand lays upon us. In Thy great mercy forgive and answer us, through Jesus Christ our Saviour-Lord.

CXXXI

O LORD our Father, we draw near through that great High Priest Who is passed into the Heavens, in Whom we 'have boldness, and access with confidence' by faith of Him. And we beseech Thee that the promise

of the Father may indeed clothe us with power, so that by our lives, as well as by our words, we may be witnesses for Jesus Christ.

We thank Thee for the great gift promised to our weakness; may we all more and more believe in the Holy Ghost, and may we all more and more find a mighty power working within our weakness, and fitting us for all our work, and for all Thy grace. May we have the Spirit of adoption, whereby we cry Abba! Father! May we have the Spirit of power and of love, and of a sound mind. May we have the Spirit of supplication, and the Spirit of holiness. And may we so live as neither to grieve nor quench that Divine Spirit, but by the power that works in us may we be made free from the law of sin and death.

We thank Thee for any illumination as to Thy word, for any quickening in the Divine life, for any stimulus to service, for any strengthening of feeble faith and kindling of dying love which any of us have ever experienced in our worship here. Thou hast been gracious in many days that are past. Be with us still, O Lord! and give us some message from Thyself which shall bear its own credentials, and be winged with its own Divine power, and so find its way to minds and hearts and wills, and issue out in noble service in our daily lives. Succour and comfort any weary and sad souls among us, and be near those who walk in darkness. Surely the darkness is blessed and soothing when Thy presence is felt in it, and thou dost make the darkness light above us. Both are alike to Thee; they cannot be alike to us, but they may each have their own messages and their own blessings. May we learn to make the highest use of joy and of sorrow, night and morning, winter and sunshine.

Be near any who may have special tasks and heavy burdens that seem to pass their strength to carry. Thou dost never bid us do anything which Thou dost not fit us to be. Give the fitness, and then shew the duty. 'Give what Thou commandest, and command what Thou wilt.'

Forgive our many evils; grant us Thy help and presence in this hour of worship. Hear us; in the Name of Christ our Lord we ask it.

CXXXII

GLADLY, O Lord, would we answer Thy merciful call to seek Thy face, and humbly do we ask Thee not to hide Thy face from us. Surely Thou hast never said to any, 'Seek ye My face in vain.' Surely Thy love streams forth to meet us, before ours is kindled to respond to Thine. Thou dost draw near ere we draw near. Help us to yield ourselves now, by thought and desire, and submission and confidence, to the drawings of Thine own Revelation of Thyself. May the light of Thy countenance ever shine into our hearts, so that we, in the possession of the perfect bliss which Thou only canst give, may, with fixed purpose, make Thee the strength of our hearts and our portion for ever.

We bless Thee that amidst all this fleeting good Thou dost manifest Thyself to them who desire Thee as the eternal Refuge. We thank Thee that we need not be condemned to be ever buffeted about from one transient scene to another, but may enter into the calm blessedness of those who have an unchanging portion, having chosen that good thing which shall not be taken away from them.

We come to Thee with humble thanksgivings for Thy

great mercies which have flowed in upon our lives in one unbroken stream. Help us to be so near to Thee that we may declare with thankfulness all Thy works, and bless Thee for all the way by which Thou hast led us. We would rise to the height of thanking Thee for disappointments and losses and sorrows. Surely Thou art training us for the rest that remains; surely Thou art preparing us for service in a better land. Help us not to cast away any of Thy precious lessons, nor to let any of the changing events of life pass us by without leaving us better than they found us, and so discharging the purpose for which Thou hast sent them. May we be disciplined by Thine hand. May we yield ourselves to Thy working. May we rejoice in all which Thou dost appoint, whether it come to us in the shape of duties enjoined or of patient endurance prescribed; may we be ready for all Thy holy will, and find that all things work together for good to us, because we love God.

We draw near to Thee feeling how unworthy we are to draw near, or to receive the blessings which come to us so abundantly. Lowly before Thee would we confess the faults of life and character, and pray Thee that Thou wouldst let the candle of the Lord shine into, and search the depths of, our spirits, and all the hidden recesses of which we ourselves know so little. Keep Thou us from secret faults. Help us to treasure nothing within us that is contrary to Thy will. May we make conscience of careful study of our own selves, in order that we may find the hidden things of darkness, and may drag them to the light that it may overcome them.

We beseech Thee for Thy blessing as we are here this morning, praising Thee for all Thy past mercies to us,

and for all the associations and memories which some of us have of days gone by in this service. Give each of us here some consciousness of Thy blessed nearness, some vision of Thy love that shall lead us to loftier desires; and more resolute determinations to live, in time to come, soberly, righteously, godly. Draw near to us according to Thy gracious promises to them that draw near to Thee; free us from the bonds of commonplace and ordinary use and wont, and help us to feel that it is good for us to draw nigh unto God. Hear us, through Jesus Christ our Saviour-Lord.

CXXXIII

O LORD, our merciful Father, Who knowest all our hearts, and seest our desires, and understandest our needs far better than we do. We beseech Thee most chiefly for hearts docile to Thy guidance, and willing to accept Thy will however it manifests itself in our daily providences. Deliver us from the pain and weariness of self-cherished and kindled desires, and teach us more and more to keep our wishes within the limits of Thy purposes, and to covet earnestly the best things, concerning which we are sure that Thou wilt satisfy our desires.

O Lord! we come from many different circumstances and spheres of duty, where Thou dost wisely appoint for us our various forms of service and of trial. May these be so far present to our minds as to make us very earnest in our approach to Thee, and never disturb our communion with Thee in this hallowed hour. May we forget them for a little in order that we may go forth and act in them the more bravely, the more wisely, and the more like our Master.

Help us to bring all our thoughts into the obedience of Christ, and to regulate the smallest of our doings by the greatest of principles. Lead us by Thy counsel, O Lord, and fit us for all Thy will. Help us to use the things temporal as means whereby we may more surely and abundantly possess the things unseen and eternal. Give us, we pray Thee, in the midst of life and its passing circumstances and events, the assured consciousness of Thy presence. O Lord ! teach us how to speak a word in Thy Name this morning. Guide us in all our handling of Thy word. Let the message of Jesus Christ and His love be glorified on our lips ; and may we hearing receive into honest and good hearts the good seed, cherishing it there that it may bring forth a hundredfold.

We beseech Thee to be very near any of us who may seem to ourselves to have special need of Thy guidance and help. Comfort all that are sad ; be the Friend and Companion of all solitary souls ; counsel those who are perplexed in purpose, or who are looking back to vanished joys, or forward to anticipated sorrows. Grant that each of us may find Thy grace taking the shape of our momentary necessities, and that the Lord supplies all our need according to His infinite riches.

We commend to Thee our Sovereign, our country, all rulers and persons of authority and influence in this land. Be with all who guide opinion, all teachers in colleges and schools and places of learning, all who wield the power of the pen and the press, all those who shape the counsels of the nations. We pray Thee to bring peace in our time. Lead the peoples into the obedience of Christ, and set up His Kingdom in all the dark places of the earth ; and make this land of ours

more and more in reality what it has so long been in name, a Christian country.

We pray for Thy blessing as we draw near; forgive our many sins, and bless us through our Lord Jesus Christ.

CXXXIV

THOU hast said, Seek ye My face; our hearts would say unto Thee, Thy face, Lord, will we seek. Hide not Thy face far from us. May we all find this morning the light of Thy countenance as our illumination, and the sweet strength of Thy presence our power and peace. May we each, whatever the homes and the circumstances from which we have come, draw near in very deed to Thee, and find that it is blessed to long after Thee; almost as blessed as to possess Thee.

We beseech Thee for Thy gracious help and presence in to-day's worship; and with thankfulness for Thy goodness to us, and for the unspeakable gift of which this day speaks, we present our petitions, and crave Thy help and blessing, through Jesus Christ our risen Lord.

CXXXV

O LORD! we thank Thee for the gospel of peace, of peace with Thee, with ourselves, with all Thy providence, and with the whole world. May Thy peace guard and abide in all our hearts. Help us to come very near to Thee, in thought and desire, in faith and submission. Thou hast given great blessings to them whose wills are bowed to Thine, and whose prayers are the expression of their submissive will.

We beseech Thee that our prayers may be sweet

indeed, because Thou dost give the spirit by which we pray; and that all our desires, being spoken to Thee, may be purged and elevated. We confess, O Lord, that we have often wandered from the highest good, and have chased after vanities, and become vain like the things that we pursue. We thank Thee for the test of prayer whereby we may discern the wrongness of many of our wishes, and be delivered from the feverishness of hot and earthly desires, and brought into the sanity of longing most for what we are quite sure that it is Thy will to get us.

Lord! we need Thee above all else; we need Thy love, Thy strength, Thy righteousness. We bless Thee that righteousness and strength and love are all treasured for us boundlessly in Jesus Christ our Saviour. Possessing Him we may be filled with all the fulness of God. Thou hast taught us to open wide our mouths when Thou hast taught us such a prayer. May it be the deepest desire of each of us, and may we be delivered from all that would draw us away from Thee, and preserve us from setting our hearts upon the things that are not. May all our true desires and joys, and our true possessions and experienced wealth, be in the things that are, and which can never be taken from us.

Lord! we come to Thee with humble petitions that Thou wouldst deliver us from any faults of character, and wouldst reveal to us the points wherein we are contrary to Thy holy will. We know that with us all there are many evil things of which we are not aware, and we pray the ancient prayer that Thou wouldst deliver us from secret faults. May we never shrink from the light which Thou dost bring to bear, that the

candle of the Lord may search our inmost parts. May we be glad when the hidden evil is brought to light, and allow ourselves in nothing, great or small, habitual or occasional, which we do not know to be in accordance with Thy holy will. Help us to be our own most rigid judges, and to be ever charitable to one another.

We pray for Thy pardoning mercy, O Lord, and, if it might be, we would pray still more for Thy cleansing mercy, that we may be purged from all our evil, and made without spot and blameless, even in Thy sight. Give each of us the help that we most need for various duties and sorrows, and for all the discipline of life. Help us that we may never petulantly put away Thy hand, nor negligently forget Thy power. May we carry Thee into every corner of our lives, and all that we do be done as for Thee, and as by Thee. May we walk before Thee and be perfect; may we walk with Thee and be at rest. May we walk after Thee, and do Thou guide us by Thy counsel.

We bless Thee that we can be sure of the loving purpose of all that annoys and distresses and perplexes. O Lord! may our faith not fail when we need it most. May it not only be in the easy days that we say, 'It is the Lord; let Him do what seemeth Him good.' But may that saying be our voice in the darkness and the storm, and may all our sorrows and trials be precious to us—the root and the buds that shall produce 'the peaceable fruit.'

Give us Thy blessing as we are gathered in Thy presence now. Lead and guide us in all our thoughts and meditations. Give us a word to speak from Thyself, and may all our hearts be prepared to hear, not what man says, but what God says to us. And we pray

that Thy good Spirit may come down upon this congregation; and we ask that the abundance of Thy gracious influences may be poured out so that this may be a living church, from whom the word of the Lord sounds out, by lip and by life.

With like blessings, O Lord, we beseech Thee to visit all Christian people and communities of all names, and in all lands, and to grant that Thy servants at home and abroad may more and more lay to heart the solemn responsibilities that devolve upon God's witnesses. Spread abroad the Name of Jesus Christ. May the world know Him that died for it. May the world bow to Him that lives to rule and bless it. Prosper the work of all our missionaries and missionary societies. In those days of distress and tribulation may Thy servants' faith be strong, and do Thou give patience to them who are called upon to endure.

We thank Thee, not for the martyrdoms, but for the martyrs' crowns. We beseech Thee that once more the blood shed may be the seed of the Church. We commend ourselves, all whom we love, all Christian folk, to Thy gracious care. We pray that Thou wouldst bless our Sovereign, our rulers, all persons of influence and authority in this land who help to mould opinion and direct action, all writers and teachers and professors and students in colleges and places of learning. We thank Thee that the Name of Jesus Christ may be exalted in the world; and the infinite treasures of knowledge, and the wisdom and blessing which are shrined in Him, may be possessed and enjoyed by mankind.

Hear us in our prayer; be near us now, we beseech Thee; forgive our sins, and accept and bless us, through Christ our Saviour.

CXXXVI

O LORD, Whose last best name is Love, we come to Thee in the strength of that Name, and laying hold on Him in Whom Thou hast spoken it for ever to all souls Thy gentleness hath made us great. And we thank Thee for all which Thou hast lavished upon us, both of the gifts that perish with the using and are renewed day by day, and of the better gift which grows as used, and is new every morning.

We bless Thee for that Saviour Who does not break the bruised reed, and for all His healing and restoring power. We bless Thee for Him Who does not quench the smoking flax, for all His quickening and enkindling power. And we pray that our weaknesses, our wounds in character and nature, may indeed be bound up; and that our faint and feeble sparks of anything better may be cherished into a bright flame that shall illuminate our own lives, and bear witness of the uncreated Light to many around us.

We draw near to Thee now, O Lord, with lowly thanksgiving for all Thy great benefits, and pray for enlightened eyes and retentive memories and grateful hearts for the smallest of Thy gifts; for the smallest gift does mean, when bestowed upon us, the most wondrous grace. We thank Thee for Thy daily benefits; for all the gifts of Thy hand, of Thy providence; for Thy commandments; for the path of duty which Thou dost mark out for us; and for all the helps so abundantly given, and yet more abundantly offered, to run in the way of Thy commandments with enlarged hearts and nimble feet. And whilst we think of all Thy daily benefits, we would ask Thee that Thou wouldst help us more faithfully, and with more con-

tinuous and conscious reference to Thee, and meet all our circumstances and undertake all our duties, and realise ever, in the midst of conflict and toil, 'the rest that remaineth,' and the peace that is granted to the people of God.

Go with us day by day, in all the variety of our callings, and according to the diversity of our temptations and circumstances. By means of these changing and fleeting events may we be led to a fuller possession of the unchanging and eternal good, the only good for our spirits. Cleanse our hearts from all their evil, cast out from our minds all our errors and delusions, reveal more clearly the points in which we are defective and the things which we think wrong, and do wrong; and help us to be honest with ourselves, and being our own most rigid judges, to be ready to pluck out the right eye if we know that it offends, and to cast aside every weight, and the sin that doth so easily beset us. And may our meditations this morning, and our unspoken resolves, the glimpses of a better light into the true realities which we may have here, work within us lasting betterment.

Draw near now, O Lord; speak to us that we may speak to one another; and may the words of our mouths, and the meditations of our hearts, be acceptable in Thy sight, O Lord, our Strength and our Redeemer.

CXXXVII

O LORD! surely Thou hast called upon each of us to work for Thee. May we never set our hands to the plough and look back, and so be unfit for the Kingdom. Strengthen us to discern Thy call, of whatever kind it

may be, and by whatever way it may be made known unto us. And, O Lord, we would ask Thee that Thou wouldst help us, without reluctance or hanging back, either in mind or in act, to obey and be Thy faithful servants.

We thank Thee, O Lord, that Thou sendest no man a warfare at his own charges, and dost never lay upon us any duties for which Thou dost not fit us. Give what Thou commandest, and command what Thou wilt. And help us with glad hearts, whatever is manifestly our duty to embrace, and however Thy call comes, to answer, 'Here am I, send me!' May all Thy servants be more conscious of Thy mission for them, and be less concerned to make a way for themselves than to find the way our God has made for us.

We thank Thee for the opportunity of thus uniting together again. Sweet and sacred memories gather around us here; still be near and shed Thy blessing upon us; may our drawing near be very childlike and real, and our going hence be accompanied with some new force in our convictions, and some new sanctifying and elevating influence in our lives. May the blessing of God rest upon each of us, according to our different callings and needs. Thy providences vary, Thy purposes remain the same. Thy grace is sufficient for all our need, and we pray for one another in the sure confidence that in Thy great storehouse each may find just what we require. Thou knowest our circumstances and our characters.

Draw near to any that have any special necessity, whether we may need it or not. If there be burdened hearts here, the Lord be near to bear the burden for them. We thank Thee that the loads which Thou dost lay upon us can carry those who have to carry them;

and we beseech Thee that Thou wouldst be near each of us, in all our difficulties, in all sorrows, in our solitude, in our sicknesses, in our perplexities, and in all the varying forms of need which press upon this weary world.

And we pray that Thou wouldst pour out Thy blessing upon all good people, and make the communities that call themselves by Thy Name more like the Name by which they are called, and more devoted to the glory of God. Give a loftier piety, a deeper consecration, a more manifest unworldliness, a more conspicuous Christ-likeness, to all professing Christian people, and to all congregations of such in churches. And grant that the word of the Lord which Thou hast entrusted to Thy servants' ministrations may be spread by earnest men throughout the world, and that wisdom and prudence may be proclaimed to the ends of the earth. And give Thy blessing to all work done, however feeble. We thank Thee that Thy strength is made perfect in weakness. May it be so in the ministrations of Thy Church. Spread abroad the knowledge of Christ's Name. And may the kingdoms of the world become the kingdoms of our Lord and of His Christ.

We pray for Thy blessing to be on our worship. Thankfully we recognise all Thy great mercies. O Lord! forgive the iniquity of our holiest things, and receive even us, and our poor petitions, through Him Whom Thou hearest always, even our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ.

CXXXVIII

LIFT up our hearts, O Lord, we pray Thee, unto Thyself; and may we all feel, as we draw near to Thee now,

that Thy ear is open, and Thy heart is open, and that Thy hand is open. Give us what we need, love us though we deserve it so little, and draw near to us now that with heart and mind we may rise above ourselves and the things seen and temporal, and come, with peaceful confidence as becometh children who are sure of the Father's heart, into Thy presence.

Blessed be Thy Name! Thou hast scattered all the mists and doubts and darknesses which come from our own transgressions and evils. And we thank Thee that the bright shining of Thine own light has scattered the obscurities and thinned away the mist. May we always walk in the sunshine, being quite sure of Thee, and so sure of ourselves.

We thank Thee for loving care, for daily providences, for the manifestations of Thy goodness made to us in all fleeting gifts and small events. And we beseech Thee that from these plain dealings of Thine hand we may ever learn the lessons which shall never fail us when we come to interpret the more perplexing passages of Thy great providence. We would begin with the remembrance that Thou preservest man and beast, and so venture to think of Thy judgments which are a mighty deep, and of Thy righteousness beneath Thy judgments, and towering above them like great mountains.

O Lord! we thank Thee that we have the key to everything in Thine own dear Son, and that Thou hast taught us of Thyself. May Thy purposes and Thy desires for us in Him be ever precious to us. Lead us into deeper knowledge of Thyself, and a clearer light in which we may walk, being always confident because we are always beholding God.

We come to Thee this morning with thanksgiving

for all the lessons and messages which this day brings to us; and we pray Thee to help us that our faith in the risen Saviour may be for us the assurance of our victory over all our evils, over sin and death. Grant, we beseech Thee, that more and more we may bear about with us, in our inmost being, the dying of the Lord Jesus, and may be made conformable unto His death, and so be partakers of the power of His Resurrection. May Christ be in us the life of our lives; and may our outward lives, in their deepest roots, 'be hid with Christ in God,' and beyond the world's sight. But help us, O Lord, to live in the world's sight lives worthy of their source; and may we in all our doings, in our relations with others, in our demeanour towards duty, in our patience in sorrow, bear about with us the image of the heavenly, and be conformed unto the pattern of Thy dear Son.

O Lord! help us, notwithstanding weakness and imperfections of mind and body, to worship before Thee with true hearts; and send us the consciousness of Thy loving presence. We commend ourselves to Thy gracious care, through Jesus Christ our Saviour.

CXXXIX

O LORD! we thank Thee that we do not need to say 'Lord! evermore give us this Bread,' but only to ask Thee that Thou wouldst help us to take it. Thou hast not waited to be asked, blessed be Thy name! else Thou wouldst have waited for ever. But when we had no such desires Thou hast bestowed upon a world, that knew not its hunger nor its food, the Bread of God.

O Lord! may we all of us live more and more by Jesus Christ, and make Him the Source and the Aim

and the End and the Nourishment of our whole being. We thank Thee that Thou hast had pity upon our poverty, and compassion upon our hunger and our sore need; hast given us all that heart can desire, all that any part of our being requires in that great Lord of all our souls. O Lord! may none of us be spending our money for that which is not bread, or starving in the presence of such bountiful supplies, bread enough and to spare in our Father's house.

O Lord! regard us here, the children of so many blessings, and yet needing so continually the supply from Thine own gracious hands. Help us all to realise more fully where our strength, and our righteousness, and our joy, and our peace are. May we not be our own worst enemies by breaking the sweet bond that unites us to Thee, nor setting up our own inclinations, our own wills, as our lords and guides.

We pray Thee be with each of us according to our different necessities and circumstances. We would crave the guidance of Thy wise Spirit, as well as the monitions of Thy providence. And we beseech Thee that Thou wouldst help us at all times to understand what the will of the Lord is, in regard even of the smallest circumstances of our daily lives.

O Lord! be with each of us, according to our present necessities. Breathe Thy peace into the sad hearts that are here this morning. May the oil of gladness be above the water of affliction. O Lord! some of us have heavy tasks to perform; fit the back for the burden, and give us a joyous spirit, unsubdued by toil and labour, we pray Thee.

Some of us may have special cause for thanksgiving this morning. If there be such in Thy presence, do Thou help us to find what we need in the one safe

place where all the necessities of all men are more than supplied.

Look upon us now, and in Thy mercy be near us, keep, and bless us, for our Lord Christ's sake.

CXL

O LORD, our merciful Father, the Rock of Ages that cannot move, we bless Thee for that constancy of love which is not easily provoked nor soon angry, which beareth all things, and for the worst of us hopeth all things. And we beseech Thee that we, when we are most conscious of our own weakness and ill-desert, may be most confident of Thy grace and pardoning mercy, and quickening and sustaining power.

So help us, we beseech Thee, O Lord, to come to Thee, driven by our own sense of need, and drawn by Thy great revelation of Thy love and care, which Thou hast given to us in all the incidents of our daily lives, in the depths of our own hearts, and most of all in the message of Thy dear Son Thou hast delivered our souls from death, our eyes from tears; Thou hast always been ready to deliver our feet from falling, and if we have fallen it is because we have put away from ourselves the help that would have kept us standing.

But we bless Thee that Thou hast revealed Thyself to us as the God that upholdeth all those that are fallen, and raiseth up all those that be bowed down. And we come to Thee now to ask Thee that Thou wouldst cleanse our hearts, wouldst deliver us from the power of evils done, wouldst set us free from the entail of past sin, wouldst strengthen us in present and in future temptation, and set our feet upon a rock, O

Lord, and establish our goings. In Thee, O Lord, is the Refuge from all our fears, the Strength for all our weakness, the Power that will conquer in all conflicts. O help us, we pray Thee, to open our hearts for the entrance of Thy grace, and come in and fill the empty room, and make us strong in the strength of Jesus Christ.

Let the blessing of the Lord our God be upon us now, and be felt to be with us. May we be aware of a Presence mightier and more than that of one another. May we realise in our faithful and quiet hearts that where two or three are gathered in Christ's Name He is ever in the midst. May we fulfil the conditions, and then He will fulfil His promise.

We thank Thee, O Lord, for all Thy loving-kindness to us. 'Day unto day uttereth speech, and night unto night sheweth knowledge,' of a loving Father's continual guiding and giving hand. And we praise Thee for all the way by which Thou hast led us. If any of us find it hard to say 'all the way,' do Thou strengthen us to understand that great and blessed thought 'He for our profit, that we might be partakers of His holiness.' And help us each, by whatever providences we may be, or may have been exercised, to see clearly the purpose of it all, and to realise in our own experience that all works together for our good.

Accept us as we come to Thee; help us to take the cup of salvation, to make our own all the blessings both of Thy providence and of Thy grace, which Thou dost hold out for our acceptance; and in taking of it may we not forget the Giver, but turn every cup of gladness or of sorrow into a cup of blessing because we name over it the Name of the Lord.

Forgive, accept, and answer, for the Lord Christ's sake.

CXLI

O LORD, our God and Father, faithful and true, Who hast sealed to us all Thy promises in Jesus Christ, and through Whom, by our own experience, dost permit us to set to our seals that God is true, and to bring our Amen. Help us to be steadfast and firm, and to accept with unfaltering faith the promises and the word that comes to us with Thine own unchangeable truth stamped upon it.

We beseech Thee to draw near to us as we are gathered in Thy presence, and to help us to open heart and mind for the entrance of Thy great gifts, and of Thy great Giver, and Thy Divine Spirit. We beseech Thee that Thou wouldst establish us in Jesus Christ, and anoint us with His anointing, that we too may live as dead to sin, and alive to God. Give us light to shine upon Thy word as we are now gathered. Help us both in hearing and in speaking Thy gracious message; may we all draw near to Thee, and may we all be aware that God is speaking to us. May this service help us to holier living, simpler faith, more Christlike characters. May we all feel that God is ever near to us. May the things unseen cheer us often—though dim to us by our own faults—through the multiplicity of our duties and the greatness of Thy transient benefits to us; and shine out clear before us, and be ever the guiding star of our lives.

Help us, O Lord, that our profit may appear unto all men, by our daily living soberly, righteously, godly, in this present world. May we be of those who plainly declare that they seek a country. May we live in the communion of the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit. Give us Thy help and blessing in all the variety

of our occupations and duties, and according to our different characters and conditions. Help us that we may live in the light of God, and walk in the sunshine of Thy presence, seeing the light in that light, and drawing from the fountain of that light, and drinking from the river of Thy pleasures.

Bless us according to our different necessities; be near any of us that are in any sorrow. Manifest Thyself unto such by those dear Names by which we have been reading of Thee, as the Father of mercies, and the God of all comfort, Who is able to comfort them that are in any tribulation with His own sweet and sufficing solace.

And now, Lord, we desire to commend ourselves to Thee, thanking Thee for Thy great mercies, beseeching Thee to help us that we may be less unworthy of Thy good gifts which perish with the using, and may more faithfully employ, and so increase, the better gifts which grow by use. Take us now into Thy care; give us Thy blessing and presence in our worship, for our Lord Jesus Christ's sake.

CXLII

O LORD our God, wondrous is Thy condescending love, which permits that Thou shouldst be extolled by our tongues, and does not turn away our prayer nor Thy mercy from us. We come to Thee to enlist all Thy powers of grace and goodness upon our sides; and we bless Thee that Thou dost hear us, and even though there be too often regard to iniquity in our hearts Thy pardoning mercy draws near to us, and by the manifestation of Thy great love does wean us from each other.

O help us to open our hearts to Thy gracious entrance, to be sure that Thou carest for us. May we feel more than ever we have done that in Thee are all supplies, and that Thou art infinitely able to bestow upon us Thy best, which is Thyself. Clothe us, we beseech Thee, with Thy purity. Strengthen us with Thy might; soften us by the inflow into our selfishness of Thy great love; and may we dwell so near to Thee by daily communion and aspiration and obedience that we shall more and more see all things in the light of God, and do all in His strength and for His sake.

We would acknowledge before Thee all our shortcomings and sins. We thank Thee that we can venture to bring all our evil into Thy sight. Surely Thou seest it, whether we bring it or no, and as surely Thou dost delight when we do bring it, and ask Thee to deliver us from it.

We thank Thee, O Lord, that no true wish to be set free from any evil in character is in vain in Thy sight. Thou hast wisely appointed that we must be labourers together with Thee in cleansing ourselves from all filthiness of flesh and spirit. And Thou hast mercifully granted Thy good Spirit to dwell with our weak spirits, and to arm us with might to fight the good fight. Help us daily that we may shake off the burden and death of our own evil natures and selfish lives, and that day by day we may more and more put on that new man which is evermore in the image of Him that created him.

Help us to be Christlike; to deny ourselves, and if need be to slay ourselves. If our eye offend us, and cause us to stumble, help us to pluck it out and cast it from us. Blessed be Thy Name! such mutilation is completeness; such death is life. Lord! be near us

day by day, and fit us for all Thy holy will, and so fit us to receive all Thy best gifts. We bless Thee for all Thy gifts, great and small, passing and permanent; those which perish with the using, and those which grow by use. And continue to bestow upon us, and make us more capable of receiving, and more desirous of retaining, Thy highest and best gifts.

Abide with us each, in all the variety of our requirements according to our conditions, our duties, our characters, our relationship with others; and help us in all things to discharge the obligations which Thy loving providence lays upon us, for surely all Thy call to duty is a promise of strength.

We beseech Thee to hear us now, to draw near to each of us in our morning's worship; and in Thy mercy to accept and bless us, through Jesus Christ our Lord and Saviour.

CXLIII

TRULY, O Lord, we know not what we should pray for, nor do we know how to pray as we ought. But give Thou the Spirit by which we pray, and incline our hearts' desires to the best things. And help us, when we come to Thee with our petitions, to have one petition underlying them all—Thy will be done. Give us that entire submission, acquiescence in Thy providence, obedience to Thy commandments, subordination of ourselves to Thee, and then Thou wilt give us the desires of our hearts when our heart's desire is to have more of God.

Help us to make our wills Thine, that Thou mayest make Thy will ours. And lead us thus, O Lord, in paths of peace and righteousness. May we walk in

the light, as Thou art in the light, and experience, and show how blessed and how noble a thing earthly life may be when it is full of Thyself. Help us that all things may work together for our good. Help us so to love Thee that in all things we may be working for good. And we pray Thee that Thou wouldst, more and more, draw us into the circle of continual communion with Thyself, which shall make us more diligent in business, more fervent in spirit, and in all things servants of God.

Be near us all, O Lord, according to our different requirements. Thou knowest the homes from which we have come. Some of them may be darkened and solitary; some just as they have been for many days past; some bright with new joys and hopes. We thank Thee for all this diversity of experience, and we bless Thee for the land of promise and of possession which Thou givest to them that put their trust in Thee.

Grant, we pray Thee, that each of us, whatever may be the complication of the present moment, may have a firm hold of Thyself, and so be strong to do, if that be our task; to endure, if that be our appointment; and to rejoice, if that be Thy gracious gift. Help us in all things to understand the meaning of the passing providences, and out of them to bring a more assured possession of the one eternal and real good. Teach us how to draw near to Thy Spirit, to handle Thy holy Word; how to hear, how to speak, and may we all be better for our gathering together this morning.

We commend ourselves, and all whom we love, our country, its rulers, and all its interests, the peoples of the earth, the dark hands that stay paralysed in the shadow of death, to Thy gracious care. We beseech

Thee that Thou wouldst send into all the darkness the great light, into all the confusions and commotions the great peace, into all the sin the great Healer; and make the world know its Saviour and its King.

Hear us, we beseech Thee, in these our prayers; and in Thy mercy forgive and accept us, for our Lord Christ's sake.

CXLIV

O LORD, our gracious Father, we too would come with 'wonder, love and praise,' for surely Thy mercies pass expectation, and rise high above all our thoughts. May that love of Thine kindle a flame of answering love in our hearts which shall flow out in constant surrender, constant aspiration, and constant practical obedience, as well as in the calves of our lips and the sacrifices of our songs.

May we all feel the good hand of the Lord our God upon us for good, drawing us nigh to Thyself, and drawing us gently and strongly away from our evil selves, and from all the cares of our low-thoughted lives. Help us, we pray Thee, to turn ourselves to Thee, and to make our own the things which Thou dost destine, and hast given us ere we asked Thee.

We bless Thee that we may all have the happiness of the man that has the God of Jacob for his help, and we pray that we may be all inclined to set our hopes on the Lord our God. Blessed be Thy Name for all Thy great mercies to us, for all Thy daily benefits, for all the minute and fleeting good things which make up so much of our lives.

We thank Thee for continued loving-kindness and tender care; and we pray this morning, when we are

wisest and nearest Thee, that Thou wouldst help us to leave out nothing that Thou hast sent us in our acknowledgments and thanksgivings. Surely even already we have found out that Thy blessings sometimes come with darkened faces. But we praise Thee that beneath the veil is Thy own face, and we thank Thee for all the hidden kernels of sweetness which we have found as time has passed on, even in the roughest and bitterest of our sorrows.

And we pray that we may be taught by experience, and never be swept away from the assurance of Thy love by any troubles, by any perplexities of mind or heart. Keep us, we pray Thee, near Thyself, that standing in the centre we may see how all the stars move in harmony and beauty.

O Lord! we bow before Thee this morning, beseeching Thee especially that Thou wouldst quicken our desires, and enlarge our capacities, and draw us away from earth and to Thyself; and that Thou wouldst bless us in our worship now, according to our different parts in this Thy service, helping us to hear, and helping us to speak, being near each of us that we may come near to Thee. Give us grace to forget anything that would hinder our full and peaceful fellowship with Thyself. Give us grace to remember whatsoever may increase that blessing; and be near us, that the words of our mouths, and the meditations of our heart, may be acceptable in Thy sight.

We praise Thee for all which this day speaks to us of a risen Saviour, for all the associations and memories of blessed hours long gone by in this place. Help us, in Thy mercy, that we may bring our whole selves to Thee. If there be evil in our hearts may we be glad that Thou shouldst look upon it; and may we believe

that whatsoever of evil Thou dost see Thou dost war against in us, and wilt help us to fight the good fight of faith, and to cast it from us. May we not cling to that which is death, and may it never be able to separate us from Him Who is life.

Be near us to hear our prayer, and to grant us Thy gracious help and presence, for our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ's sake.

CXLV

O LORD our God, we thank Thee that we can call on Thee as our future, and we beseech Thee that we may never forget that Thou art our Judge too; and so, whilst we draw near with all child-like confidence and love, may we come with deep reverence, and ever hearing the Voice that summons us to be holy as Thou art holy. Cleanse our poor hearts from all their weaknesses and follies, from their unreliableness and unworthiness. Deliver us from yielding up the treasures of our love and trust to any in competition with Thyself. And whilst we thankfully accept the blessings which Thou dost give us in our daily lives, and the joys of living in, and being loved by, and loving human hearts, help us to use all these as means to come nearer to Thyself; and may the ladder, having its foot, have its top in the heavens with the face of God Himself above.

O Lord! we come to Thee this morning, the creatures of Thy gracious hands, the recipients of a thousand mercies, made by Thee to possess Thee, and unmade by ourselves, so that we are unworthy of Thee, and unfit for Thee. But we pray Thee to help us against our baser selves, and to give strength to any feeble

good that may be in us, and to quicken it into mighty power and more manifest dominion in our daily lives.

Lord! we are ever unable to judge ourselves. We pray for the searchlight of the candle of the Lord to illuminate all our darkness; and may we recognise, and recognising abhor, and abhorring eject, our lurking evils and secret sins. Do Thou strengthen us day by day for the work of perfecting holiness in the fear of the Lord; and not in His fear only, but in His love, and in the trust in the great and precious promises by which Thou dost reinforce all our weakness, and dost teach us to dare to expect things beyond our reach.

We pray for Thy grace to abide upon us, as we are here this morning. Lead us by the green pastures and the still waters of Thy great truth and love. We beseech Thee for wisdom to hear and to speak, and pray that in whatever else this service may fail, it may bring us all into real and happy touch with God manifest in His Son.

O Lord! bless us all in our daily callings and duties. We thank Thee that Thou hast given us work to do which we clearly see to be ours. Help us to look not every man on his own things, but also on the things of others, and not to count that we have fulfilled Thy will unless we have been helpers of many.

We beseech Thee to make us faithful stewards of whatever gifts, of every sort, Thou dost bestow upon us; and may that be as much a part of our day's work as our professions or our callings. Some of Thy servants may be looking back with sad hearts; some may be looking forward with shrinking apprehension. Comfort them all! We thank Thee that as our day so may our strength be; and whatever Thy hand of pro-

vidence lays upon us to bear, Thy hand of grace may strengthen us to carry.

We beseech Thee to bless all Christian people, and all workers for their fellows of all sorts; and to grant that the many earnest hearts that are seeking to spread truth and goodness, and above all, the Name of Jesus Christ throughout the world, may know and may see, in such measure as is good for them, that their labour is not in vain because it is in the Lord.

Take us now, O Lord, into Thy care; regard all the necessities of this nation; check and subdue our national sins; deliver us from our national weaknesses and errors; bring us to know and to recognise more practically, in our national and civic and social life, the rule of Jesus Christ, and His commandment as the golden law. And do Thou grant that, in like manner, all the nations of the world may be healed of their sorrows and gathered in, to couch, like a peaceful flock, round the feet, and to be guided by the rod and the staff of the One Shepherd.

Hear us; grant us Thy blessing and Thy help now, through Jesus Christ our Lord.

CXLVI

HELP us, we pray Thee, O Lord! and draw our hearts to Thyself by the outgoing of Thy own heart to us. May we each feel the magnetism of Thy manifested love in Christ our Lord.

We come to Thee this morning with many reasons for praise, and we thank Thee that we can gather them all into one when we bring thanks to God for His unspeakable gift. We bless Thee for Him in Whom are treasured all the wealth of wisdom and

knowledge, in Whom Thou hast tabernacled among us, bringing grace and truth to us all, if we will have them.

We bless Thee for that Lord, the channel and medium of every common gift, and for all the mercies which speak of Thy greater love, and minister to our greater and eternal blessedness.

O Lord! we come to Thee but too conscious of our poor answers to Thy great love; and we feel that whatever else we need, we need pardon not only for the things in which we have gone against Thy holy will, but for the many more in which we have fallen beneath Thy gracious commandments, and have failed to apprehend and make our own Thy gracious gifts. We pray for Thy forgiveness; and that in each heart in Thy presence now there may move that Divine Spirit, all Whose strength-giving work begins by teaching us our own weakness. May that Divine Spirit convince us of sin, and may we welcome the conviction; and then, Lord, do Thou help us to lay firm hold on the righteousness which Thou dost impart to all that seek it where Thou hast stored it, in Jesus Christ our Saviour.

Strengthen us, we pray Thee, by Thy good Spirit too, in this hour of worship, and grant that each of us may feel that it is no vain thing to wait upon the Lord. May we indeed be waiting upon Thee, not only in these outward forms of worship and communion and praise, but in the silence of our own souls. And oh! do Thou help us to a wise forgetfulness and a wise remembrance; that we may forget everything in daily life that may distract our thoughts, or interfere with our devotion; and may remember our own great needs, Thy greater gift, and the way by which even Christ our Lord, our need and Thy gift, may meet.

Be with us, O Lord, in our changing conditions, and when we return again to the ordinary duties of the week, may we bear with us some impulse, some influence, some steadying power, some overcoming might, from our communion with Thee this day. And so the Lord accept and bless, and be near us now, and help us in this hour of worship; and through Thy help now in this hour help us in our daily lives, through Jesus Christ our Lord and Saviour.

CXLVII

LIFT us, O Lord, we beseech Thee, to that happy sunlit height where we shall always feel the warm beams of Thy love. And whatever in our own hearts, or in our own circumstances, or in the mysteries of life, may seem to contradict our faith, may we be of those who know and believe the love that God hath to us.

Lord! we need little else if only we can hold fast by that conviction. And yet Thou knowest how foolishly and waywardly we have cast away the pearl of great price, and how we have been contented to slake our thirst at broken cisterns, and to live by the sweetness of limited and transient laws.

Help us, O Lord, we pray Thee, whatever else fills our hearts, to love them in God and God in them. And do Thou strengthen us, we beseech Thee, that our days may all be passed under the influence of that mighty constraining and inspiring power. May we be the children of love, and walk in it; and not only with heart and soul and strength and mind turn its beams upwards to Thee, but outwards upon men. Oh to have more of that victorious power over our own rooted and obstinate self-regard. Oh to know more

of the blessedness of those who lose their lives and find them, who cast out self, and so have a better self formed within them. Abide with us, Lord, that day by day we may seek to mould ourselves after the Divine likeness, and dwell in love and dwell in God.

We come to Thee this morning, O Lord, thanking Thee for Thy great mercies to us; and beseech Thee that Thou wouldst draw near us now, and bless us as we worship here before Thee. We would cast ourselves, O Lord, on Thy faithful promises. We know that Thou art ready to come near to us, in the fulness of Thy grace, and beseech Thee that Thou wouldst help us to put away everything that may come between us and the rich flow of Thy Spirit's influence; and do Thou help us to hear and to speak, and make this an hour of true communion with the living God.

Bless each of us, day by day, in all our various occupations and duties. We thank Thee that diverse as these may be, there is one grace that can fit each of us for every task; and one Divine Spirit Who, dwelling with us, can make us more equal to all circumstances. Thou dost send to us changing conditions of joy and sorrow, failure and success, hopes disappointed and hopes fulfilled. And we thank Thee that all the changes mean but one thing, that we may be partakers of Thy holiness. May we be fellow-workers with Thee, and so use the things temporal that not only we finally fail not of the things that are eternal, but that day by day we may apprehend these more clearly, and appropriate them more fully, by our right use of the changing circumstances of our fleeting lives.

Now, O Lord, we desire to commend ourselves to Thy gracious care. We cast ourselves on Thy pro-

mises; we confess our own unfitness and unworthiness; and we beseech Thee that Thy Divine Spirit may Himself come to us this morning, and guide us into all truth.

Hear us, we beseech Thee, and forgive and bless, for our Lord Christ's sake.

CXLVIII

THOU saidst, 'Seek ye My face!' May our hearts say unto Thee 'Thy face, Lord, will we seek!' 'Hide not Thy face far from us.' Blessed be Thy Name! Thou never dost hide from seeking souls. Thou hast not spoken in secret. Thou hast never said to any of the seed of Jacob, Seek ye My face in vain. Therefore, O Lord, we come to Thee now, lowly and yet confident, and believe that Thou wilt ever answer us, and that they who seek Thee earnestly shall find Thee.

O prepare our hearts, for the preparation of the heart and the answer alike come from Thee. Draw us, and then we will run after Thee. Help us to see some glimpses of Thy sufficiency and goodness which may slacken earth's hold upon us, and let some beam of Thy own uncreated and ineffable light shine into our hearts that shall darken the glories of all besides.

We bless Thee for all which Thou hast given us to know of Thyself. But, O Lord, the more loftily we think of Thy great and continuous revelation of Thyself to us, in all ways and at all times, the more ashamed we are of our own slowness of apprehension. 'Thou hast been so long time with us, and yet we have not known Thee.' Forgive! we pray Thee, all the blindness of our indisposition to avail ourselves of the light of Thy glory shining down upon us for ever.

And draw us by the sacred attractions of Thy Touch into the innermost place, where we may dwell alone with God.

We bless Thee that Thou hast a house ever open to us. May we more and more make Thee our strong habitation, whereunto we continually resort. And may all the duties of our daily lives, and the various occupations and scenes through which we pass, avail not to break our fellowship with Thee; but may all things, rightly used and subordinated, tend to make us feel more our need of Thee and Thy sufficiency for us. Help us thus to live on high, that we may all the more earnestly and patiently do Thy work in the valley.

We beseech Thee for Thy blessing as we are gathered here in Thy presence; and with our prayer we would blend our thanksgiving for all the help which Thou hast stored for us, even in outward things, by the requirements of this day with its memories.

May we feel that it is not only we that are seeking God, but God Who is seeking us. O Lord! help us to worship Thee in spirit and in truth, knowing the great and wondrous truth that Thou seekest such to worship Thee. We would come into Thy presence in the great Name before which all barriers melt, and all closed gates open. We would come through Jesus Christ our Lord, and beseech Thee that joining ourselves to Him by humble faith and loyal obedience we may be joined to the Lord, and receive what He possesses, and sit with Him in heavenly places at Thy right hand. May it be so for us, even as we pass through the changing scenes and pressing duties of our daily lives. And may it be eminently so in such an hour as this when, in outward form, we draw near to Thee. We thank Thee for the

momentary cessation of earthly duties, for the loosened grip of earthly cares, for the diminished attraction of earthly joys.

Help us all this morning to rejoice in Jesus Christ, and worship God in the Spirit. Hear us in our supplication, and of Thy great mercy answer and forgive, through Christ our Lord.

CXLIX

O LORD our God, help us, we pray Thee, to love Thee with all our hearts and minds, and to live in accordance with our supreme love. Give us day by day the consciousness that Thou lovest us that we may love Thee; and grant, O Lord, more and more it may be manifested in our lives where our hearts are, and what our treasure is. Oh for greater devotion of Spirit, for more continuous and close fellowship with Thyself. O to be withdrawn more and more from all false loves, and to hold all true and good ones in subordination and in union with Thyself.

Strengthen us, O Lord, that we may indeed walk in that way of love which is the way of peace. And pardon our hearts, and strengthen our wills, and rule Thou our desires, and direct Thou our acts. And in all things, outward and inward, may we live consecrated lives.

We beseech Thee to regard us now in Thy presence, to give us Thy help as we remain together. Speak Thou in our heart, O Lord, that we may speak Thy word and not our own, and make Thy message powerful to the building up of all that is good in us, and to the weakening and casting out of all that is evil. And

do Thou grant that we all, hearers and speaker alike, may be able to pass beyond the outward form, and to enter into the depths of true communion with God, the submission of heart and effort and of desire towards and after Him. Guide us in our words, in all our worship, and help us when we go hence to bear away some influence that may blend with the other influences of our lives, and make for goodness.

Bless us each, we pray Thee, according to our callings and characters and circumstances. And since Thou dost appoint our necessary share of joy and sorrow, may we acquiesce in Thy appointments, and try to discover what is the will of the Lord, as revealed in our changing conditions. If any of us have any special difficulty in keeping hold of Thy hand by reason of any special burdens of sorrow, and are ready to say, 'as for me, my feet were almost gone,' do Thou stay the tremulous hearts, and strengthen weak faith, and give the measure of Thy consolation, which is greater than the measure of our sorrow.

O Lord! look upon all Christian people, and on all who may be feeling after Thee if haply they may find Thee. We beseech Thee to clear away errors, and bring pure confidence in Thyself and in Thy Son. And make all things plain to them that seek it. Give power, O Lord! to all the work of good people who are trying to benefit their fellows, and especially to them who are seeking to make known that Name in which all benefit and blessing are treasured, the Name of Jesus Christ.

Now, O Lord, we thank Thee that we can commit ourselves to Thee; and we would do it in peaceful trust and patient hope, believing that Thou art able to keep all that is committed to Thee against that day. Hear

us; give us Thy help and blessing now, for our Lord Jesus Christ's sake.

CL

MANY, O Lord our God, are Thy wonderful words, and Thy thoughts which are to usward. We thank Thee for all those manifold and great reasons which we have to love Thee; and beseech Thee that we may not only recount them with our lives, but realise them in our deepest hearts, and thereby be drawn more than ever we have been to answering love which shall purge our hearts and fulfil all Thy law. May it be true of us that we delight to do Thy will, and that Thy law is within our hearts. May we make Thy commandments our joys. May we ever feel that nothing is so blessed as to yield to Thee, and in our daily obedience may we realise the great peace which they have who love Thy law.

We thank Thee, O Lord, for all Thy mercies lavished upon us, without stint and without interruption. We beseech Thee that the blessings which fill our daily lives, and escape our notice for the most part because they are continuous, may be more visible to us, and more felt by us than ever they have been. And may they lead us on into the depths of God, and draw us to desire, and so to possess, the richer blessings which Thou canst only bestow on hearts that seek Thee.

O Lord! preserve us from the folly and the sin of which we have been so often guilty, of letting what was meant to lead us to God keep us away from Him; and let the things seen and temporal, and all the varying manifestations of Thy unvarying love which come to us through them, draw us to desire more,

and to be more fit to possess, the things unseen and eternal.

We come to Thee this morning feeling that unless Thy mercies were more than could be remembered, our sins, which are more than the hairs of our heads, would hinder us from looking up to Thee. But we thank Thee that Thou hast anticipated our need, and hast revealed Thy great love to us, that it may cheer us when we are cast down, and raise us again when we are burdened with the consciousness of demerit and unworthiness. May we never think of our own shortcomings without thinking of Thy goodness and love, and never think of Thy goodness and love without thinking of our shortcomings. Help us to be humble, in our confidence, and confident in our humility. When we draw near to Thee may we ever feel that Thou hast drawn near to us first, and most effectually, and that Thou art ready to put away from us all in us that comes between us and Thee. May we feel and realise that it is so now, and with emancipated and lightened hearts may we draw near to God, Who has drawn near to us.

We thank Thee for all Thy great mercies to us. We bless Thee for the recurrence of this day, for all of which it reminds us, of Him in Whom we are more than conquerors over death and the grave. We beseech Thee that Thou wouldst draw near to us now; help and bless and be with us in this our worship, through Jesus Christ our Lord and Saviour.

CLI

O LORD our Father, we thank Thee that because every good gift comes from Thee, and because Thou hast no

variableness nor shadow of turning, nothing can come from Thee but what is good. We beseech Thee to help us ever to keep ourselves on guard against our own lusts lest being enticed by them we should turn Thy gifts into temptations, and make poison of our necessary food. As we wait before Thee now give us, Lord, some blessing from Thyself which shall abide, hallowing and elevating, calming and cleansing, quickening us for many days.

We thank Thee that Thou dost permit us to gather together thus, to reinforce our several weaknesses by conjoined strength; and we pray Thee that Thou wouldst be with us in our worship, and wouldst guide us in our thoughts and words, as well as in our hearing and our thoughts. And upon us all, according to our divers necessities, may there descend the gifts that we need. Thou art the God that givest liberally and dost upbraid not. We have to confess our past misuse of many of Thy gifts. But we pray Thee that Thou wouldst come near to us now, and bestow upon us, as we may severally require, patience and fortitude, strength to endure and strength to do, that in all the variety of our conditions, whether these be bright or dark, solitary or companioned, we may have the assurance that Thou art with us, and that all things are working together for good.

Draw near to each, bless all whom we love, and all whom we should remember at Thy throne; granting to each the gifts that they specially require, and helping all Thy servants throughout the world to live as witnesses of God. Take us into Thy care now; hear us, be with us, and bless us, for our Lord Christ's sake.

CLII

O LORD, our Father, Thou hast opened to us the doors of Thy house, and the way to Thy very heart. And we thank Thee for these rich and faithful promises which Thou hast attached to our spreading out our hearts before Thee.

O help us, we beseech Thee, that in everything by prayer and supplication, and never forgetting thanksgiving, we may make our requests known to Thee. We bless Thee that Thou dost let us say anything, that we need hide nothing in our hearts. And we beseech Thee that we may have access with confidence, and with free speech, to Thyself.

O keep us from ever cherishing anything in our minds that we dare not tell to Thee, and may we make that ability to speak to Thee about it more of a test than we have done of our thoughts and deserts.

We bless Thee for the assurance, not that Thou wilt give us what we think we need, but that Thou wilt always give us Thy peace in our hearts if we keep near Thee in supplication. Lord! we know that that is better than all outward gifts. May we live in that faith, and so be able to accept Thy not answering according to our desires, seeing that Thou dost answer always according to a better wisdom and a deeper knowledge.

We sometimes feel as if our prayers would be more fervent if we were always sure that in regard of outward things we should get what we desire. But we beseech Thee to deliver us from that temptation, and help us more and more to pray as those who feel that it is enough for them that if they ask anything according to Thy will Thou dost hear.

But we bless Thee that again Thou dost delight when we tell Thee all, even our foolish thoughts, and we pray Thee to help us to be frank with God always. And now draw near to us in our worship, and breathe Thy gracious spirit into all our hearts. May we indeed rejoice in the Lord alway, and find it increasingly true that our God supplies all our need according to His riches in glory in Christ Jesus.

We pray for a firmer hold of Thine own self. We beseech Thee, for Thou hast taught us even so great a prayer, that Christ may dwell in our hearts by faith; that we may be able to apprehend the measureless measures of Thy love, and so be filled with all the fulness of God.

O Lord! we need Thee at every moment, for our smallest tasks are too great unless Thou dost help us, and the greatest are not too great if we have Thy presence. Be Thou near us, our Sufficiency and our Strength; be Thou in us our Life; be Thou before us that we may walk as in Thy sight all the day long. And do Thou help us to make Jesus Christ, the Angel in Whom Thy name is, the Pattern and the Power, the Aim and the Reward of all our thoughts and words and deeds. Dwell in our hearts, Lord, that we may dwell in Thee; and being in that safe habitation may we depart from danger, sin, and fear.

O Lord! we would bring our thanksgivings for all Thy great benefits to us. Surely 'day unto day uttereth speech, and night unto night sheweth knowledge' of Thy loving-kindness and Thy tender care. How often we take Thy gifts with no thought of the Giver. How often we misuse them. How often we forget all about them as soon as they have perished with the using. We beseech Thee that it may be

otherwise with us in the days that may yet be before us, so that we may bring into every corner of our lives gratitude, and be able to bless God for all the way by which He has led us these many years.

Now, Lord, we pray Thee to breathe Thy Spirit upon all our hearts and minds. We thank Thee for this opportunity of meeting together, in the midst of the cares and duties of the week, and that these gatherings may continue to be what they have been for some of us for many years that are gone—sources of blessing and of strength.

Be near us whenever we assemble as a Christian community. May a simpler, stronger faith characterise all the members of this church and congregation. May they be living more and more manifestly by the power of the world to come, and walking in the footsteps of Jesus Christ. May our responsibilities lie heavy upon us, and may we be sustained in them by Thy upholding grace; and all Thy people learn that they are here for God's sake as well as for their own, and set here to be God's apostles and missionaries in the world; and grant that from our lives, our manifest Christ-likeness, our unworthiness, our purity, and our gentleness and pity for men's souls, there may sound out the word of the Lord.

We beseech Thee to hear us, to pour out Thy grace upon us when we are in sorrow or trouble. To all such bring Thy gracious tender touch which alone is able to handle without hurting sore hearts.

Mercifully hear and forgive us; grant Thy blessing in this hour of worship, for our Saviour Christ's sake.

CLIII

O LORD our God, we thank Thee for that Name. It is Thou that hast made us, and we are Thine, and Thou dost remember all the needs which Thou hast made us to feel. Thou knowest our frame, and since Thou hast created us Thou hast bound Thyself to satisfy us. We thank Thee for the great promises which Thy very word of Creation brings with it. 'Faithful is He that hath called us, Who also shall do it.' Thou art not of those who begin works that they are not able to finish. When we cry unto Thee do Thou perfect that which concerneth us. Forsake not the works of Thine own hands. Thou dost answer, 'I will never leave Thee, nor forsake Thee, till I have done that which I have spoken to Thee of.'

Help us then, we beseech Thee, to commit the keeping of ourselves, body, soul and estate; and may we have an active faith, and trust ourselves to Thee in well-doing, not expecting Thy providence to stretch out its hand to save us when we go against Thy holy will.

Accept our praise, O Lord, for all the great blessings which Thou hast bestowed upon us; and chiefly because we can come to Thee with free hearts, in full assurance as children of faith, and having no dread, though we have reverent awe, and can believe that Thou art ever pacified towards us for all that we have done, and art ready to accept and to bless and answer us in Jesus Christ our Saviour.

We thank Thee for those sufferings whereby we are healed; and we pray that we may each of us, in our measure and degree, take up our cross daily and follow the Lord our Redeemer and our Pattern.

We bless Thee for Him Who did no sin, neither was guile found in His mouth. And we beseech Thee to give us more and more of the spirit that was in Christ Jesus, that in meekness and gentleness we too may live. And may we be wise to make the highest and best use of all the changing circumstances of our daily lives. We thank Thee that Thou art in the darkness as in the light. We thank Thee that Thou sendest nothing to Thy children which has not the token of Thy love plainly written upon it to the eye of faith. And we beseech Thee that all which befalls us in our daily lives may so minister to our highest needs as that we shall be thankful for it, and for the darkness and the sorrow.

We praise Thee that Thou art more willing to give Thy blessing than we often are to ask it. We thank Thee for all the rich store which Thou hast laid up for Thy children in Thy word. We pray that the Spirit of the Lord may shine on Thy truth, and permit us all not only to perceive but to receive and obey the will of the Lord revealed to us in His Word.

Guide us, we pray Thee, in all our meditations and worship in this hour of prayer. We bless Thee that we can turn aside and find refreshment and strengthening and patience and peace in drawing near to God. May it be a true hour of fellowship with the Father and the Son through the Divine Spirit for each of us here.

Be with all who are dear to us, and all members of this community of ours who are absent from us. The Lord be with them where they are. If any are in sorrow or sickness, or watching by the beds of dear ones, give them what they specially need, we pray. If any are busied with legitimate duties, and pressed

upon by many cares, help such, even in the midst of the business of life, to be fervent in spirit, serving the Lord as truly as we are. And do Thou pour out of Thy holy influences upon this congregation. Make us more manifestly Thy witnesses and epistles; and grant, we beseech Thee, that the work of our hands, being done for Thy holy Name, may be done with Thy rich blessing; and that much good may result from our gathering together, and the ministration of Thy truth amongst us.

We pray Thee to lift away from hearts and minds anything that may come in the way of our full entrance into the meaning and the blessedness of this hour of worship, and deliver us from any externals that may mar the completeness of our communion with Thee.

The Lord help us, and be near us; speak to us and through us; the Lord accept, forgive, and answer our petitions; through Jesus Christ our Lord and Saviour.

CLIV

O LORD, our gracious Father, help us, we beseech Thee, that we, too, may belong to those who by faith 'out of weakness are made strong,' and who are able to look away from the things that are seen and temporal unto Jesus, the great Pattern and perfect Example of faith. We bless Thee that Thou hast appointed for each of us the race that is set before us, and that when Thou dost command us to run Thou dost put strength into the feeble knees, and make our sluggish feet as hind's feet. Lead us in the paths of righteousness, and may we find them the paths of peace.

We pray Thee, O Lord, to help us, that day by day

we may go in that blessed and peaceful trust, and clear and realising apprehension of Thyself revealed to us in Jesus Christ, whereby we shall be made more than conquerors, and ready for all tasks.

We thank Thee that Thou art, not shall be, called *our* God. And may we never be ashamed to be called Thy people, and may we live as pilgrims and sojourners, content to dwell in tabernacles, because we 'look for a city which hath foundations.' We thank Thee that we do not belong to this present fleeting order of things, for our hearts are set on Thee. And we pray that the passing away of all that can pass may never sadden us, may never darken our hearts or dim our eyes; but that we may always be able to realise our present possession of the unchanging good, and the eternal blessedness which we have in Thyself. May our faith work in us by love, and bring forth all great and precious fruits which Thou dost intend that it should produce in men's hearts.

We thank Thee, O Lord, for the large mercies which we have received from Thy hand. Day by day Thou dost awake us to get fresh blessing from Thee, and dost repeat with patient love old mercies, so that we have with every new morning to cherish new hope, and with every new evening to return again unto our rest with thankfulness. We pray Thee that Thou wouldst strengthen us to pass on through life in cheerful godliness, in humble dependence upon Thyself, and seeking to exhibit in our characters and to incorporate into our very being the graces which Thou art so willing to bestow, and which Christ has made sure to us. We thank Thee for the opportunity to turn away for a time from the daily cares, and even from the daily duties, and to draw near to Thee. And we

beseech Thee that our gatherings together thus may always have the seal of Thine approval on them, and in our own hearts the manifest sign that it is no vain thing to wait upon the Lord.

We bless Thee for past mercies received from Thee in such circumstances, and in this place, and we pray that Thou wouldst still be with us, and be with us now. And grant that our meeting together this evening may tend to the deepening in all our hearts and minds of the determination to know 'nothing save Jesus Christ, and Him crucified,' and to live 'according to the pattern which has been shewed to us on the mount.'

O Lord! remember all whom we love, and all who may be in any of our hearts now; especially any that may be in trouble or sorrow, or may be mourning for separations by the great Separator, and who may be looking into empty places that can never be filled. Be very near to all such, and do Thou Thyself fill the places which Thou hast emptied.

We pray Thee to guide each of us in all the variety of our perplexity, circumstances and difficulties; when we find it hard to decide the path of duty, and, perhaps, harder still to walk in it. Be near us in such, and in all circumstances, guiding us by Thy counsel, sustaining us by Thy strong hand, impelling us by the impulse which Thou dost breathe into waiting hearts, and making us strong to carry out our convictions in all regions and in every way. And now we commit ourselves to Thy gracious care, with thankfulness for Thy many mercies to us; and beseeching Thee that Thou wouldst still help and bless us, as Thou hast helped and blessed us in the past; through Him Who is the same yesterday, and to-day, and for ever, even Christ our living Lord.

CLV

O LORD, our gracious Father, lift us, we beseech Thee, to that height of peaceful, patient trust in Thee which make it impossible for us to be anxious because we are sure that 'our heavenly Father knoweth that we have need' of these outward things. It is Thy 'good pleasure to give us the Kingdom.' Thou dost give us the greater, Thou wilt not withhold the less. Thou hast given us that supreme end, Thou wilt not forget to provide the things that are needful on the road to it. We would cast ourselves on Thy gracious care. We know that Thou dost love us. We believe in Thy wise and rich providences, and we pray that Thou wouldst help us to interpret all the transitions, the trials, the temptations, the sorrows, and the agonies of this life in the light of that great faith that Thou doest all things, and that all things which Thou doest are well.

We thank Thee that we can look upon Thee as 'the Father of Lights, from Whom cometh every good and every perfect gift.' And since we know that 'there is no variableness,' nothing but what is good and perfect can come from Thy hands to Thy children. Bow our spirits, and perfect them, and enlighten us that with a single eye we may look upon Thy dealings with us, and upon all things here below, and so walk ever in the light of those who understand the way by which the Lord their God has led them.

We beseech Thee for Thy patience, for Thy peace, for the light of Thy love to shine into our hearts, for Thy holy Spirit to elevate and rectify our thoughts of what is good for us, and our desires after Thee, that we may seek the best things first, the 'Kingdom of God and His righteousness,' and be content to regard

these objects—which men who have not Thee to look up to, look upon as the essentials and the most blessed things—as additions to that which is ‘the one thing needful.’

We praise and bless Thy Name that Thou dost permit Thy children to come to Thee and hold fellowship with Thee. We speak to Thee, and we believe that Thou dost speak to us. We thank Thee for the voices in Thy word, and in Thy providences in our hearts. We thank Thee most for the great Voice in which the whole of that which, at sundry times and in divers manners, has been spoken through the ages, is spoken to us in Thy Son. May we learn all the Name which is in Him, and may we come more and more into realising the communion with Thyself which shall carry us on through all the duties, and it may be the difficulties and the sorrows of our daily lives, and shall make us more than conquerors in Him that loves us.

We pray Thee to be with us in our gathering this evening, to be near all our hearts and minds, and to draw us into the secret place of the Most High, that we may behold more clearly than we often do, and aspire more earnestly after, the things that are at Thy right hand; and Thyself Who art even more than they. We pray for Thy teaching, for Thy illumination to shine into our hearts and upon Thy word; and we ask Thee to give us some word in season that may come to all our minds and hearts as the message from God that we need.

We bless Thee for all that Thou hast ministered to many hearts in past days and years here in these gatherings. Grant, O Lord, that the light of Thy love may shine more brightly amongst us in our Christian experience, and in our daily lives may we more mani-

festly copy Thine. May Thy servants gathered here in the name of Jesus Christ really be knit together in His word and power, and may we be able to live in the world adorning the teaching in all things.

Be near all in sorrow, all who have special cares and burdens to bear, comfort all sad hearts, companion all lonely ones, enlighten all that are darkened. Oh counsel the perplexed, be strength to the weak; be grace according to our need to each of us.

O Lord, hear us in our prayers, forgive our many sins, in Thy great mercy and love be present with us as we worship here before Thee, through Jesus Christ our Lord and Saviour.

CLVI

O LORD! truly we have nothing to pay, and frankly Thou forgivest us all. May the sense of our infinite obligations to Thee for Thine infinite mercy to us open up fountains of joyful surrender in our hearts which will flow out always in all holy living, and in grateful yielding of ourselves to that great Saviour.

Deliver us, we pray Thee, from the error of ever making light of the sins which Thy pardoning mercy takes away. May we all feel, what indeed is true, that we all have been forgiven very much. And may our love ever bear some proportion to our obligation and our lives be ordered by our love.

We thank Thee, O Lord, that however the past has been stained and imperfect, they who come to Thee with penitent tears and with thankful love cease to be sinners, whatever men may think. We thank Thee that Thou, Who knowest us better than any of us know one another, hast infinite mercy, and that Thou

canst read all hearts. Read ours, we beseech Thee, and teach us to read them. May we have no pharisaical abhorrence of sinful men and women, no pharisaical confidence in our own deeds, but we be glad to take our place beside the publicans of the world, and be content to depend, as they do, upon Thy mercy, unmerited and free, all-sufficient and entire.

But we pray Thee, O Lord, that Thou wouldst help us day by day 'to perfect holiness in the fear of the Lord'; and just because Thou hast lifted us from the horrible pit and the miry clay may we feel that our feet are set upon a rock. And may our goings be established, and we live day by day cultivating and making our own more and more of the excellences and the graces of which Jesus Christ is the Example, and of which, blessed be God! Jesus Christ is the source for us.

We thank Thee that in union with Him we become other than we are. We thank Thee for that new life created after the image of Thyself, which is imparted to all them that humbly cherish the faith in Jesus Christ. And we pray that we may experience, and feel that we growingly experience, not only Thy forgiving mercy but Thy sanctifying and elevating and ennobling grace. May we be growing, and to our own perception growing, more and more in the likeness of our Lord and Saviour.

Thou hast appointed that the nearer we come to Thee, the further off we feel we are. Thou hast made it the case that the more we grow towards God, the more we are sensible of the distance between us. But we thank Thee for that gracious knowledge of infirmity, of imperfection, which ever accompanies the advance in the Divine life. And we beseech Thee that

the higher we rise towards Thee, the lowlier we may lie in our own estimation, as recognising how far it is from the highest mountain-tops to the Heavens, and from the most perfect man to God. But help us, we pray Thee, not only to be conscious of the imperfection of sin, but to be buoyed up, and borne onwards by, and uprising continually to calm assurance that we shall be like Him when we see Him as He is.

We thank Thee for the great hope, we thank Thee for the encouragement which comes to all toilers and wrestlers here below. We thank Thee that none of us needs to give up, or to let the feeble hands hang down, and the knees give way and cease to advance on the road to God. We pray that we may be helped and heartened day by day, to take up our cross and our burden to-day, to do the day's work with the day's strength, and to look as those who trust in Thee may look without presumption, that in all good things possessed, and in all good things done and realised in our souls, 'to-morrow shall be as this day, and much more abundant.'

Help us thus, we pray Thee, to grow in the grace and the knowledge of our Saviour. May our lives be peaceful and happy lives because we are coming ever nearer to our love, ever closer to our Redeemer, ever liker to Him in His perfection.

We beseech Thee to give us Thy blessing in this evening's worship. May it be indeed to meet with Thee that we come. Oh! do Thou help us to pass beyond all external aids, even by the help of these aids, to come into the secret place of the Most High, that we may each have touch with God, and each feel that it is Thee Who by these outward ordinances art speaking to our hearts. Lead us, we pray Thee, in our

hour of service into the holy places where we shall find our Master, and lose our sins. And if we have brought with us burdens or sorrows, tasks or duties, cares or troubles, strengthen us by waiting upon Thee to bear and to do all Thy holy will, and may we do it as from the heart, and so do it well.

In all the variety of circumstances and character, guide us along the paths of life so that we may glorify Thy Holy Name. It is for Thee to appoint whether the road be rough or smooth, crooked or straight. We dare not seem to prescribe to Thee. Thou maintainest our lot. May our hearts say Thou shalt choose our inheritance for us, but help us, wherever Thou dost lead us, and whatever Thou dost lay upon us, giving us grace according to our need, strength that shall perfect itself in our weakness, and the daily bread and succour for the daily hunger and necessity.

Take us into Thy care now, O Lord, forgive our many sins, and grant us Thy gracious presence and blessing in this hour of worship, for the sake of Jesus Christ our Lord and Saviour.

CLVII

O LORD! Who hast appointed that 'every transgression and disobedience shall bear its just recompense of reward,' and dost gather Thy ministers of retribution wheresoever corruption is, we thank Thee that that is not all that we know about Thee; and we bless Thee that Thou not only dost vindicate Thy righteousness, but Thou dost manifest, in yet more blessed and wondrous fashion, Thine infinite love and Thy pitying mercy.

We would cast ourselves on Thee, O Lord! We know

that in this there is much that may bring down Thy chastisements. But we thank Thee that we can think of all our demerit and all our evil, and yet not be afraid in Thy presence, but rather court Thine eye. For surely Thou lovest yet better than Thou knowest, and surely Thou art willing to purge away whatsoever Thou seest in us, and which unpurged might need Thy rod.

We beseech Thee that the mighty power of Thy revealed love in Jesus Christ, the attraction of His Cross, the cleansing of His blood, the indwelling of His Spirit, may purify our hearts and minds, and make us more and more, every day we live, victors over any evil tendencies within us, and lords of all temptations without.

We pray Thee that entering into the fulness of that reconciling heart we may be the friends of God, and able to look forward to the Day of the Lord with joy. May we be of those who are not in the darkness that that day should overtake us as a thief. May we be children of the light and of the day, the day that is, and the Day that comes. And so may we walk as children of the light in all purity, casting off the work of darkness, and bracing on the armour of light.

Go with us, we beseech Thee, through our daily lives; and in all the frequently-recurring trifles which make these up may we be able to bring to bear the highest principles of love to Jesus Christ, and the desire to be like Him; so that nothing may be too small to be offered by us upon Thine altar, even as nothing thus offered is too small to be acceptable to Thee. We thank Thee that Thou dost care for the trifles that Thy children bring. We beseech Thee that our poor work may find a place in that wonderful

storehouse where Thou dost keep and treasure cups of cold water, and widows' mites, and we thus live consecrating all that we have to Thine own Self, and realising in the consecration the fuller and more blessed possession of whatsoever we thus offer.

We come to Thee, O Lord, with humble thanksgiving for all Thy great goodness to us. Surely we have to say that we will sing 'of mercy and of judgment,' and we have to embrace both mercies and judgments, in our song of praise, and believe that they are all coming from the one hand, and all meant for the one end. May we not murmur, may we not waste our time and weaken our minds by vain regrets for good that is irrevocably past. May we be children of the future, and not only of the past, and believe that, loving Thee, 'to-morrow,' and right away on to the end of the days, 'shall be as this day, and much more abundant.'

We thank Thee, O Lord, that Thou hast not exhausted Thy blessings by the past blessings that Thou hast given us. We thank Thee that the fountain is as full as when it began to flow. We thank Thee that as of old Thy servants sung, so in all generations Thy people have still to acknowledge that Thy 'mercy endureth for ever.' And we pray that as Thy mercy so our trust and praise may be continual, and last as long as our lives shall last. Help us to go on day by day very quietly, very peacefully, and rejoicingly, having learnt in whatsoever state we are, therewith to be content, because in it we have, and know that we have, the fountain of all goodness in the life of God, in Christ Jesus our Lord.

We beseech Thee to bless each of us, to go with us in all the variety of our occupations, circumstances

and work. Guide us by Thy counsel in the paths of daily life, and help us to set the Lord always before us, that so none of the agitations that shake our souls to their very centre may greatly move us. We beseech Thee to give us wisdom to understand the beckonings of Thy hand, and the motions of Thine eye, in the providences of our lives, and may none of us waste our afflictions or our joys.

Comfort any amongst us that are in sadness, draw near to any who may especially need the consolations of our God, and manifest Thyself to such as the Father of mercies, and the God of all comfort.

We pray Thee to give us Thy blessing as we are assembled now. Help us to meditate upon Thy truth and to take it into our hearts and wills, as well as into our minds. And may our days witness that we profit, having received with meekness the engrafted word which is able to save our souls.

O Lord! we thank Thee for all Thy past goodness to us in our times of worship here; for all the blessings, that some of us have received for many years during these services. And we pray that Thou wouldst be with us still, and teach us more and more of Thy ways; and grant, we pray Thee, that the loving Spirit of Jesus Christ may dwell in us as a church, and in us individually, and that here the provisions of Thy house being blessed, and Thy poor being filled with bread, the Kingdom of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ may be advanced abundantly.

Hear us in these our prayers, and in Thy mercy forgive and accept us, for our Lord Christ's sake.

CLVIII

O LORD, our gracious God, Whose life has come down to us filtered through all the little deeds of daily life, and in one great flood of benediction and mercy in Jesus Christ our Lord, we would draw near to Thee now, as becomes us, with glad hearts, putting away from us, by Thy gracious help, anything that might interfere with the completeness of our consecration and the fulness of our acceptance of Thyself. We would rejoice that, however poor and unworthy may be our desires and our thoughts about Thee, Thou art infinitely willing to bend Thyself to our lowness, and even sometimes to shape Thy gifts after our desires, always Thou dost shape them after our needs.

But Thou hast mercifully invited us to command Thee concerning the work of Thy hands. Lord! we thank Thee that we can never better Thy purposes. We bless Thee that our highest wisdom and truest peace lie in conforming ourselves to Thy will, not in forcing ours upon Thee. And we pray Thee to help us whenever we come to Thy Throne, to come in the sureness which Thou dost permit us to cherish, that if we ask anything according to Thy will Thou hearest us. May we never think that that is but a poor charter of liberty. May we always stand firm in the confidence that nothing half so good as Thy will can ever befall us. So teach us day by day to take up the burden, and to face the circumstances which Thy providences appoint, and to find that in submission there is peace, and in 'keeping Thy commandments there is great reward.'

Help us all, we pray Thee, to stand fast in the liberty wherewith Christ has made us free. May our hearts

be knit to Him by true faith, by loyal love, by continual obedience and aspiration; and so may the good gifts which are in His hands in such rich abundance flow into our characters and lives in such a measure as we require. We praise Thee for Him, and for all that His Name means to us sinful creatures. We beseech Thee that we may grow in the knowledge of that fulness which is treasured in our Lord Christ, and may growingly make our own, and be enriched in the possession of all the wealth of God that is in Jesus Christ. Thou hast taught us to pray great prayers, and encouraged by Thy teaching we venture to ask what we dare not have dreamt of without it, that Christ may dwell in our hearts by faith; that being rooted and grounded in love we may be able to comprehend the height and breadth and depth and length of Thy love, and be filled with all the fulness of God. Help us to make these our supreme desires for life, and help us in some measure to realise the desire, for Thou hast promised that when Thy children call Thou wilt answer, and whatsoever they are able to receive Thou wilt bestow.

In all the variety of our daily duties and circumstances, guide us, O Lord, defend us from evil, bestow upon us such outward blessings as Thou dost know to be for our highest good. And help us so to handle all Thy providences as that they may indeed be blessings for us. If any of us have come into Thy house with full hearts of thankfulness 'looking back upon all the way by which the Lord our God has led us,' accept our praise. If any of us have come with sad hearts, feeling that Thy footsteps are in the sea and Thy paths in the deep waters, help us, we pray Thee, to be sure, too, that Thy way is in the sanctuary and that righteous-

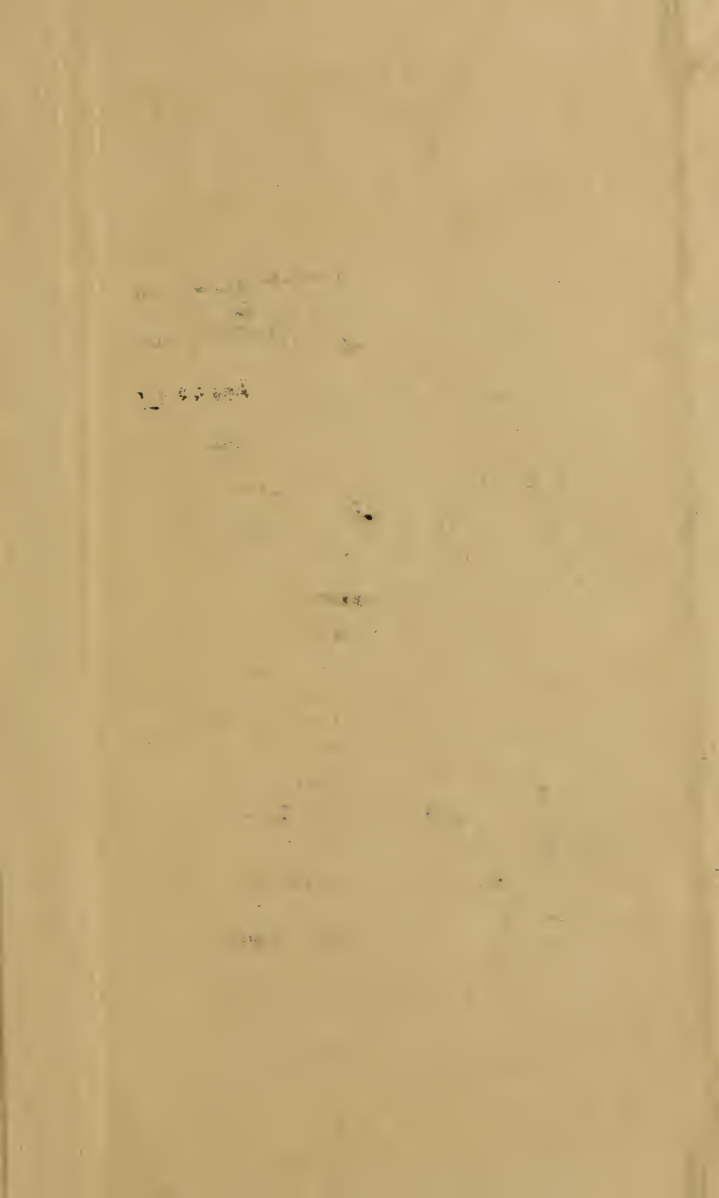
ness and holiness are the foundations of Thy Throne, and in all Thy dealings with us. And may the comforts of Thy sweet presence, and the gracious peace that follows when we can say, 'Thy will be done,' be granted to each of us that may have any sorrows which make it hard for sense to acquiesce in Thy providences.

Guide us now, O Lord, as we are gathered together. Help us to meditate upon Thy holy word, and give us some message to speak that may be from Thyself, and may find its way to the very springs of life in each of us, and there work blessing and healing.

And now, Lord, we desire to commend ourselves to Thy gracious care. We pray Thee to be near us and bless us, to forgive and to answer us, through Jesus Christ our Lord and Saviour.

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